

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second-Class Matter at the New York Post Office, November 7, 1898, by Frank Tousey.

No. 402.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 14, 1906.

Price 5 Cents.

LITTLE PAUL JONES; OR, THE SCOURGE OF THE BRITISH COAST.

By CAPT THOS H. WILSON.



"I will do it!" cried Captain Johnson, as he aimed a pistol at Little Paul Jones, and fired at the same time. At that instant Doris sprang in front of the young captain, only to receive a fatal wound in the breast.

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BY CAPTAIN THOS. H. WILSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLAN OF ACTION.

"Paul Jones, Paul Jones! That is rather a queer name for a Frenchman."

The speaker was a stalwart young English naval officer about twenty-one years of age, whose name was Dudley, and who held a position as first lieutenant on board of a British frigate then lying in New York harbor.

The person whom he addressed was a small lad of nineteen, rather delicate in appearance, and who wore the French naval uniform.

They had met in the bar-room of a New York hotel one evening some years after the close of our War of the Revolution, and at a time when France and England were at peace, although war was expected to break out between the two nations very soon after.

The young lad calling himself Paul Jones, although small and slight for his age, was then serving as the first mate of a French privateer which was also lying off the Battery.

Other naval officers belonging to different nations stood around the large bar-room, but the English were in the majority.

During peace or war, the sailors of England and France hated each other in the most cordial manner, and they fought like wildcats when meeting in public places in foreign ports.

The same could be said of the Americans and English, as the great struggle for independence was not forgotten by the former.

Americans remembered that the French fought with them in that desperate strife for freedom, while the English persecuted them in every way.

Lieutenant Dudley spoke in very insolent tones while addressing the mate of the French privateer, who answered him by saying:

"I was born in France, sir; my mother was a French lady, but my father was an American citizen."

The little mate spoke English well, but with a decided French accent, and his tones were manly and defiant.

The English sailor stared down at the little fellow as he responded:

"Your father was an American citizen, was he? Perhaps you are some relation of that infamous traitor and pirate, the Paul Jones who commanded an American frigate during the war of the rebellion."

The little fellow drew his form up in a proud way, and his dark eyes flashed as he replied:

"My father's name was Paul Jones. He was no more of a traitor than any of the patriots who fought by land and sea to throw off the English yoke. It is true he was born under the flag, but so were all the heroes whom you style as rebels. George Washington himself, whose equal is not in the world to-day, was born under the English flag, for that matter. My father was driven out of his own country of Scotland by unjust laws, and he joined with the patriots of America in establishing a Republic here on this broad land. Dare to call him a traitor and a pirate again and I will demand satisfaction to the death!"

While little Paul Jones was speaking the Englishman glared at him in the most insolent manner, and he then cried:

"You impudent little puppy, that is how I serve the son of a traitorous pirate."

And Lieutenant Dudley spat in the face of the lad, following up the insult by striking him four or five blows on the head in quick succession, as he kept crying:

"That is how I would like to treat your father, only I would kick him in the bargain before I would put a rope around his neck to hang him from the yardarm."

Little Paul Jones went down under the blows, as he had no chance with the stalwart young Englishmen in such an encounter.

Lieutenant Dudley then bestowed several kicks on the prostrate lad as he kept crying:

"There's satisfaction for you, you miserable little spawn of a traitor, and I only wish I had your father, if the scoundrel were alive, in the same position."

"The assault was so sudden that two or three of the little French sailor's friends around could not spring to his assistance, and the lad was lying insensible on the floor.

Cries of "Shame, shame!" burst from some Americans present, and one stout young fellow of seventeen sprang at Lieutenant Dudley and struck him a blow on the face as he cried:

"You mustn't abuse the son of our hero, you cowardly English bully, while Hank Carson can fight for him."

A general row then ensued, the French and Americans present striving to rescue the prostrate lad, while the Englishmen supported their officer, who was a host in himself in the use of his fists.

The stalwart English officer took every opportunity during the struggle of kicking at the prostrate son of the great naval hero of the Revolution, while Hank Carson fought to protect the lad as well as he could.

No weapons were used on either side so far, and the English were getting decidedly the best of the struggle, as they outnumbered their foes.

The landlord and his waiters were endeavoring to quell the row when an old man, wearing a heavy gray beard and a soft hat pulled down over his eyes, entered the bar-room to cast a lightning glance around.

While the old stranger was dressed as a citizen of the better class, he had all the gait and manner of a sailor, and he carried a heavy stick in his right hand.

After casting a searching glance around, as if to take in the bearings of the fight, the old fellow's eyes rested a moment on the prostrate youth, and then a yell of rage burst from him as he sprang into the midst of the strife, crying:

"You cowardly hound, how dare you kick a helpless lad when he's down!"

Then right and left flew that stick, and it fell twice on young Dudley's head, bearing him to the floor beside his prostrate victim.

The old man then bent down over the lad and raised him tenderly in his arms, as he cried out:

"Landlord, some brandy up in my room at once. I'll settle with some of you hounds afterwards."

Holding the lad clasped to his breast with one arm, the old man used the stick on his foes with the other, and cleared a space to the stairway, as he kept crying:

"You miserable hounds, you would murder a helpless lad."

Several watchmen had then entered the hotel, and the English thought it best to beat a retreat to their boats.

Lieutenant Dudley had regained his feet, and he gave the order to retreat, as he cried:

"I'll finish young Paul Jones yet."

The young sailor calling himself Hank Carson sprang up the stairs to assist the old man in bearing little Paul Jones to the bedroom, but the old man turned him back, crying:

"I'll tend to the lad myself. Just see that I get some brandy and water at once, and I will thank you hereafter, young sir."

The young sailor felt instinctively that the old gentleman was one accustomed to command, and he turned to obey him, muttering:

"Tarnation take me if that old gent hasn't sailed the briny in a ship of his own 'fore now, and thunder, how he did lay them out with that stick! I wonder if he can be any relation of little Paul Jones."

The insensible lad was soon placed on a soft bed, and the old man hastened to tend to him in the most tender manner.

When the young fellow opened his eyes he looked up at the old stranger with a start and exclaimed:

"You here, dear——"

The old man placed his hand on the lad's mouth before he

could say another word, and he then hastened to lock the bedroom door as he remarked:

"I hope you are not badly hurt, my dear boy?"

Little Paul Jones was not much injured bodily, but he had received a fearful shock to his sensitive nature.

On drinking a little more of the brandy the lad cried like a child as he groaned forth:

"To think that the brute of an Englishman should strike me down that way, and not fight me with sword or pistol like a sailor or a gentleman!"

The old gentleman calmed the lad as well as he could, and he soon heard from him all about the quarrel.

How the old man's eyes did glare with rage, and how he did strike the bed with his clenched fist as he grumbled forth:

"Never mind, never mind, my lad, as you will have full satisfaction for that insult yet. Do you know the name of the scoundrel who abused you?"

"He is the first lieutenant of the British frigate Marmion, sir, and his name is Dudley."

"Dudley! Dudley!" exclaimed the old man, in still more excited tones. "Can it be possible that he is the son of my old enemy, Lord Dudley, who was the English minister at Moscow when I served in the Russian navy?"

"I heard that his father was a man of great influence in England, and that is why this young scoundrel has received such rapid promotion. It is said that he will be made captain of the frigate on his return to England."

"I hope he may, and then you will have full satisfaction, as I have great news for you, my dear boy."

"Has America declared war against England again?"

"No, no, I am sorry to say, and I fear that that will not come about for some years yet. But England has declared war against France, and there will be glorious work on the sea again."

"Will you command a French vessel in the war?"

"Not exactly, for reasons that I will soon explain. But you will command one, and I will serve under you under an assumed name."

"Why must that be?"

"I will very soon tell you. Of course, you know how I fought against the English during the War of the Revolution, and how they hate the very sound of my name."

"I had an example of that this evening."

"Yes, and they will have more reason to hate the name as borne by you when we strike again. You also know, my son, that I entered the Russian service after the close of the American war, as I could not remain idle."

"I know that; and I know that you won high honors while serving the Russians."

"The honors were nothing to the sufferings, insults, and mortifications I endured while in Russia, all through English gold and influence."

"I have heard something about that."

The old man sighed before he continued, saying:

"No tongue can describe what I have suffered on account of the hatred of the English. The English minister and his agents in Russia plotted against me in the vilest manner. They had me accused of crimes that none but the basest scoundrels could commit, and I would have been put to death ere now were it not for the name I had achieved while serving the great Russian empress."

"But she could not protect you through all."

"No power on earth could protect me against English hatred while I lived in public. Growing tired of the ceaseless insults and plots formed against me, I retired from the Russian service and went to Paris to see you, as your dear mother was dead at that time. Very soon after that a report of my death

was spread around the world, and I did not contradict it, as I had a purpose in letting the English think that their undying enemy was no more."

Little Paul Jones nodded his head and smiled as he remarked:

"I think I can conceive now, sir, why you caused me to enter the French navy."

"If you do not I will soon explain. I do not fear death on the deck of a good ship, but I do not wish to give the English rascals a chance of hanging me as they would a murderer. They claim that I am still a British subject, as their law is once a subject always a subject."

"I know that they still claim the right of searching American vessels for sailors who may have been born under the English flag."

"Yes, and there will be a war between the two nations on that subject before very long. But I may not live to see it, and that brings me to the present now. England has declared war against France, and the time has come for me, with your aid, to wipe out some of the wrongs and insults showered on me by the English in Russia. Old Paul Jones is dead to all but you and a few trusted friends, but his son lives to avenge him."

The young man's eyes brightened, and he pressed his father's hand, as he exclaimed:

"Oh, may I have the courage and the skill to carry out your purpose, with your aid, dear father."

"You will, you will, my lad. You are a citizen of France, and they cannot hang you as a traitor if you should chance to be taken. Some rich merchant friends of mine in Baltimore have fitted out a splendid clipper for me, and in her we will go to play havoc along the British coasts. I have some private injuries to avenge, and so have you, not forgetting the scoundrel who insulted you this evening. You will command the vessel and I will be with you on board in an humble position, where I will be known as Tom Henry."

"And are you certain that no one will recognize you, father?"

"Not a soul. The merchants in Baltimore alone know that I am alive, and they intrust the ship to me and to you. I have already procured you authority from the French government to work the ship as a French privateer. We will man her with a crew of desperate men, but brave fellows all who have suffered from English persecution. We will have deserters from English warships born in Ireland. We will have Americans who speak French a little, and who will jump at a chance to strike at English commerce for booty and glory. And we will have Frenchmen who will die to a man ere falling into the power of their old enemies."

"And where do you propose to cruise, father?"

"Along the British coast; I know every harbor and inlet along there. We will not only attack English ships on the high seas, but we will assail the castles and the mansions of the English aristocrats who rob the poor people year after year while they denounce Paul Jones as a pirate. In a word, my lad, our ship will be a scourge of the English coast, and Little Paul Jones will cause as much terror to the tyrants along there as his father did years ago."

The young sailor's eyes blazed with enthusiasm, and he pressed his father's hand over again as he exclaimed:

"It is a glorious project, father, and I pray to Heaven that I may meet Lieutenant Dudley some day soon on equal terms."

"You will, will you! The vessel you will command will bear over twenty guns. She is the fleetest clipper ever sailing out of Baltimore, and when we are not strong enough to fight the English we can laugh at them. Send in your resignation

as mate to-morrow, and I'll place a commission in your hands as captain of the finest French privateer that was ever built."

"What is she called?"

"We will call her the Scorpion, and woe be to the enemies of the dead Paul Jones when she appears in sight."

"And woe to Lieutenant Dudley if I ever get a chance to cross swords with him, father, as he will find that Little Paul Jones is his match in the use of a sword. Oh, how my blood boils when I think of how the big bully treated me; and I hate the English now more than you do, if that is possible."

Some three weeks after the Scorpion sailed out of Baltimore with the French flag flying at her masthead.

Among the crew were an old boatswain who went under the name of Tom Henri and the young sailor known as Hank Carson.

CHAPTER II.

INSULT FOR INSULT.

As war was raging between France and England, the greatest excitement prevailed in both countries, more especially along the coasts.

The English fleets swept along the French coasts, blockading harbors, attacking small forts, and destroying or capturing nearly all the merchant vessels venturing out on the high seas.

The French troops were gathering in force along the western shores, threatening an invasion of England. French privateers stole out from their harbors at night to plunder the merchant vessels of the enemy, and one daring captain ventured into the English Channel to spread terror and dismay along the bays and harbors as well as among the merchant princes of the great commercial nation.

The Scorpion was at work in carrying out the programme laid out by old Paul Jones, and in less than a month after her arrival on the English coast over twenty rich merchantmen of the enemy had been captured and destroyed by the relentless young privateer.

Several English frigates sailed out in quest of the fleet clipper, and she was sighted several times, but she sailed away from her powerful foes with apparent ease, only to double on them again and renew her attacks on the richly-laden merchantmen returning from the East and West Indies.

All the English sailors captured by the French privateer were borne away to France as prisoners, while the passengers were landed at points on the English coast, together with all their personal property.

The fortunate ones thus escaping spoke in the highest terms of the young French captain, as they all declared that he was as courteous as he was daring; while the ladies asserted that "he was as pretty a little fellow as ever wore a mustache."

Little Paul Jones was sporting an ornament of that description on his upper lip when he appeared on the English coast, as his father had advised him to add dignity to appearance in order to command respect of the men, saying:

"The lads will think you too boyish to command them unless you appear older, and a false mustache will answer the purpose."

Several of the English armed merchantmen captured had offered resistance, but the privateer soon silenced their guns, or closed to board them in overpowering numbers.

While the threatened invasion by the French army caused the greatest excitement and terror throughout the whole of

England, Little Paul Jones was thus adding to the alarm by playing havoc in the Channel and along the coast.

Charles Dudley was in London when he first heard of the captures by the young Frenchman, and he could scarcely believe that the famous privateer was the little mate whom he had abused in New York.

The young lieutenant was promoted to command the frigate *Marmion* soon after reaching England, and his ship was undergoing repairs at the time.

Young Captain Dudley then started down for his father's castle in Scotland, taking several of his boon companions with him.

The young English sailor was a fast youth, and he believed in enjoying himself while on shore.

The castle was about two miles from Porthaven, a small seaport town on the southern coast of Scotland.

A strong fort commanded the entrance to the harbor; Dudley Castle was also well fortified, and a large force of soldiers and militia were stationed in the town.

Captain Dudley found on reaching the castle with his city friends that his mother, Lady Dudley, was in a very delicate state of health, and he was compelled to carry on his orgies in a large tavern about a mile from Porthaven.

The young captain was entertaining his friends in the tavern one evening when a young army officer said to him:

"I presume you know that the rascally young French privateer landed a lot of passengers from an English vessel along the coast to-day?"

"Yes, yes. I heard about it, and I would like to talk to one of them, as I want to get a good description of the young pirate," answered Dudley.

He then went on telling of the row in New York, and concluded by saying:

"I am sorry now I did not give the young rascal a meeting next morning, but I hope to sink his ship when I get out with the *Marmion*."

"If it is the same Paul Jones, I wonder that he did not insist on a duel," remarked the young soldier, "as he cannot be a coward, and it was a terrible insult to spit in his face."

"I hope to do it again when I meet him on the deck of his vessel, and— Who is this?"

Captain Dudley and his friends were supping in the large parlor back from the bar-room, when the door between was suddenly flung open, and a young man in the garb of a French naval officer burst suddenly in on them.

Pausing a moment or so to glance around the table, the young Frenchman sprang suddenly at Captain Dudley and spat in his face, striking him a sharp blow in the face at the same time, as he cried:

"Insult for insult, you brute of an Englishman, and now you will fight me with sword and pistol on equal terms."

A yell of rage burst from the young Englishman as he sprang to his feet and clenched his hands, crying:

"Thunder and furies, you audacious scoundrel, I'll have your life for that."

The young Frenchman sprang back a few paces after dealing the blow, draying his sword, as he cried:

"You will not pummel me this time, you brutal bully, but I will fight you with sword or pistol in the presence of your friends and my own brave men."

While Little Paul Jones was thus speaking, over twenty of his sailors filed into the room and surrounded the table, pointing pistols and cutlasses at the astonished guests, while their young captain continued in clear tone:

"Be not alarmed, gentlemen. I am Captain Paul Jones, of the French privateer *Scorpion*, it is true, but I am here only to demand satisfaction of that brutal wretch, and to return

insult for insult. You can all perceive that he is almost twice my size, yet he was coward enough to assail me with his huge fists, and to kick me in an infamous manner when I was prostrate and helpless. My quarrel now is with Captain Dudley alone."

Captain Dudley and his friends, who numbered about fifteen in all, were staring at the armed foreign intruders in terror and amazement while Little Paul Jones was thus speaking, and the sailors from the privateer were grinning and chuckling at their blank faces.

As if to add to the consternation several cannon shots boomed out from the mouth of the harbor above, and the alarm bells in the town rang out at the same time.

"The French are on us!" cried the young soldier, "and they are attacking the fort!"

"Lay down your arms, gentlemen," responded Little Paul Jones, "as you are my prisoners for the present. My ship is attacking the fort, but it is only a feint on our part for the purpose of drawing attention in that direction. My gallant sailors surround this place now, and we will hold it until I have settled with Captain Dudley here. Brute, beast, coward, will you fight me with weapons, or must I lash you with the flat end of my sword? Wretch, I cannot breathe freely until —"

Captain Dudley appeared to be paralyzed until that moment, when he suddenly drew his sword and confronted the young Frenchman, crying:

"You infernal cub of an infamous pirate, I will fight you to the death on the instant, if your rascals will show us fair play."

"Fear not on that account, bully, as my men are here to protect me from your friends only. I see that your sword is larger than mine, and so is your arm, yet I will encounter you and wipe out the scorching stain you inflicted on me in New York. Clear a space, my lads, and disarm the gentlemen for the present."

The active sailors seized the weapons of the Englishmen; and then hastened to clear a space in the center of the large apartment.

The booming of the cannon continued in the harbor above, and the bells rang out from the town, when the two enemies faced each other with their swords, Little Paul Jones crying:

"My brave lads, if I am slain you must not molest my opponent or the gentlemen present. You will obey me."

"To the death," responded an old sailor, while the others bent their heads in approval.

That old sailor was the veteran Paul Jones, and he had planned the surprise in order to satisfy his son's anxiety to wipe out the insult inflicted on him.

About seventy-five men from the privateer had landed at a cove about two miles below the tavern, and a signal was given to the clipper outside to attack the fort at the proper time.

Among those who were to witness the duel were Hank Carson, the young sailor who had fought for Little Paul Jones in the New York hotel, and a small negro lad who was serving as a cabin-boy on board the *Scorpion*.

Hank Carson was a thorough-going New York boy of the period, and an excellent sailor for one of his age, having shipped as a cabin-boy when he was only thirteen years old.

He was tall and strong, full of fight and fun, and a fast friend in danger or trouble, while he almost adored Little Paul Jones.

Hank was an orphan and a waif in the streets of New York as long as he could remember, and he was not acquainted with a single relative in the world.

The negro was a bright lad of sixteen or seventeen, who

was formerly a powder-monkey on board the French privateer on which Little Paul Jones had served as first mate.

The little black called himself Adonis Belvidere, but the sailors gave him the title of Donis only, and he claimed to be a native of one of the French West India Islands.

On leaving the fast privateer, Little Paul Jones requested permission of the captain to take Donis with him, and the little negro was more than delighted at the change, as he was devotedly attached to his new captain.

A strange attachment had sprung up between the young captain and the little negro, and the former often asked himself:

"Where have I heard the boy's voice before, as it sounds very familiar to me at times?"

Yet the young captain could not answer the question, while Donis declared that he had never met the young officer until he shipped as a powder monkey at Toulon in France.

Old Paul Jones was not in the least nervous when he saw his little son confronting the stalwart young Englishman, as he had the utmost confidence in the lad's skill with the sword.

The prisoners and the sailors ranged themselves around the sides of the apartment, with their eyes fixed on the duelists, while many of the sailors outside peered in at the windows.

An ugly frown appeared on Captain Dudley's countenance when he first confronted the little privateer, and then a sarcastic smile brightened his features as he inquired in sneering tones:

"You little beggar, do you hope to cope with me, and then bear your men away in safety?"

"I hope to do more than that, brutal wretch," responded Little Paul Jones, in calm and confident tones, "as I intend this night's lesson as the first I will give you only."

"Indeed! And may I ask what you intend to do with me hereafter?"

"I propose to encounter you at sea hereafter, and I now challenge you to a struggle at sea, pledging my sacred honor that the Scorpion will never show her stern to the Marmion if you do not attack me in company."

"I accept that challenge, providing you escape my sword to-night, little tom-tit. And now let us at it."

CHAPTER III.

BLOWS AND KICKS.

The guns were booming and the bells were ringing when the swords of the young captains met, Little Paul Jones crying:

"I will strike you down, cruel wretch, and treat you as you treated me."

"Mind your eye, little bantam, and see that your men keep faith when I spit you," retorted Dudley, with a grim smile.

"Less talk and more work," cried the old veteran, "as we must not waste time."

Captain Dudley set on with intense vigor, aiming to beat down the little fellow's guard as soon as possible, as he cried:

"I'll waste no more time on the little monkey."

The little monkey stood his ground like a stake, parrying the fierce blows aimed at him without budging an inch, as he retorted:

"Strike on, big braggart, but I'll soon cut your dung-hill comb for you."

Captain Dudley did strike on with still more force and fury, yet to the great amazement of his friends, he could not force his little opponent back one inch, or cause him to lower his weapon for one instant.

Exclamations of surprise burst from the Englishmen on witnessing the little Frenchman's extraordinary skill and nerve, while the men of the privateer exchanged significant nods of approval, though not a loud word was uttered by any of the spectators.

Captain Dudley kept dancing around the little hero, striking away until his arm was almost powerless, and still Little Paul Jones baffled every effort without moving from the center of the room, while he kept crying:

"Strike on, big braggart, and I will soon serve you as you served me."

Captain Dudley drew back to rest at last, and then the little fellow made at him with a bound, crying:

"Defend yourself, brutal wretch, as I will now give you blow for blow and kick for kick."

The young Englishman raised his sword to parry the sturdy blow aimed at him, but the weapon was dashed from his grasp on the instant, and Little Paul Jones caught it in his left hand, as he cried:

"With your sword I will punish you, cruel wretch, and who will declare that my act is not a just one."

While thus speaking, Little Paul Jones struck Dudley over the head with the flat side of his weapon, and the stalwart young man fell on the floor as if stunned.

Planting his right foot on the breast of the fallen foe, the little hero struck at him with the flat side of the sword several times, and then administered a dozen or more severe kicks, while he kept exclaiming, in almost delirious tones:

"It was thus the big coward served me when I was insensible. Who will dare say that he does not deserve the punishment? I now wash out the stain on me, and I declare again that the Scorpion will fight his frigate when he sails out to meet me."

Exclamations of approval burst from the sailors, and old Paul Jones cried:

"Do not wear out your boots on him, brave captain, as we have a journey before us."

"Give the signal to the ship, then," answered Little Paul Jones, "and we will retreat. Do you hear me, Captain Dudley?"

Captain Dudley heard the question, but he did not answer.

The prostrate officer was so enraged and mortified that he could not move or utter a word, while the most bitter and revengeful projects flashed through his brain.

The little French officer had scarcely given the order to retreat to the boats, when one of the sailors outside put his head through a window, crying:

"Captain Jones, some of the enemy's soldiers are marching this way from the town on the double quick."

"Then we will away. Fall in, lads, and keep in order. Gentlemen, remember that Little Paul Jones is not done with Captain Dudley, and that it is war to the death with us!"

Then out from the tavern rushed the French sailors, their gallant little captain bowing to the Englishmen as he retreated.

The privateers were scarcely out on the road when Captain Dudley sprang to his feet and ran to the side window, crying:

"Some of you away to hasten on the troops. May old Nick take me at once if I do not skin that little fiend alive and roast him this very night! Thunder and furies, how can I live down the disgrace? I will have vengeance, if I sold my soul to the fiend for it!"

The English military officers present ran out of the back door to hasten the troops coming from the town, while Captain Dudley's city friends attempted to console him, one of them saying:

"If the little fiend should escape to-night, you can have full revenge when you sail out in the frigate."

A fearful imprecation burst from the disgraced officer ere he replied:

"I cannot bear the disgrace an hour, and I will have revenge this very night. Here are the troops, and give me a sword, as I will never wear that accursed weapon again."

Seizing one of his friends' swords, Captain Dudley dashed out to meet the troops, crying:

"The French pirates are retreating along the shore. On, on, at the double quick, and slay the dogs before they can gain their boats. A thousand pounds for the man who will take their young captain alive to-night."

The troops thus hastening in pursuit of the privateers numbered over two hundred men of the regular army, and they had been summoned in that direction by a hostler who had escaped from the tavern before Little Paul Jones' men could surround the place.

The soldiers dashed on at a run, shouting:

"Death to the French dogs. We'll give them graves on English soil."

Old Paul Jones led the way in the retreat, as he was familiar with every inch of the ground in his boyhood days.

The little hero was last on the narrow path, which ran along the high cliffs over the sea.

The sailors made good time, as they were in light marching order, having only their cutlasses and large pistols.

When the privateers were within about half a mile of the cove, where their boats awaited them, Little Paul Jones stumbled against a piece of loose rock and fell over on the land side of the cliff, exclaiming:

"Mercy on me!"

A cry of agony burst from the little negro, who had been marching in front of his beloved captain, and he cried:

"The captain, the captain! The saints and angels preserve him!"

The sailors came to a halt on the instant, and old Paul Jones pushed his way back, crying:

"What is the matter here? What has become of our captain?"

"He is over here in that dark abyss," answered the little negro, as he wrung his hands in despair. "Oh, I will plunge over and——"

"Keep still, you black fool!" cried the old man, as he peered over. "Back with you a little, my lads, and hold the path against the enemy. The cliff slopes down on this side, and he may not be injured much. Captain Jones! Captain Jones, are you alive down there?"

There was no response to the question, and the little negro uttered a cry of agony, slipping down the side of the cliff, as he cried:

"My dear captain is dead, and I will down to embrace him."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIGHT ON THE CLIFF.

When Little Paul Jones fell over on the side of the cliff, the soldiers were not more than a quarter of a mile behind the privateers.

Although the old sailor known as Tom Henri only ranked as a petty officer on board the Scorpion, he was looked upon with great favor and respect by all the sailors, and no one questioned his right to lead the party when the young captain met with the mishap.

Moreover, all the other officers were on board the clipper at the time.

The old sailor drew his men up on the instant, as he continued:

"Look to your arms, lads, as I know you'll not leave the captain in the lurch."

A murmur of applause was the answer, and the old hero continued:

"Behind the rocks there with you, and we'll give them a volley if they press on. Up with the signal for aid, and we'll have the lads on board here soon."

Hank Carson and three of his mates were then gliding down the steep bank after the black boy, and the other sailors sprang in behind the jutting rocks.

The old hero alone kept on the narrow path to confront his enemies. The clipper was bearing along the coast toward the cove where the boats were lying, when two blue rockets went up from the cliff.

Two cannon shots from the ship answered the signals, and the old hero said to himself:

"If my brave boy is alive we'll get him off now, even if a whole regiment of redcoats were to come against us."

The night was dark, and the soldiers pressed on the path on a run, led on by Captain Dudley, who kept crying:

"We'll catch the rascals before they can get away in the boats. Press on, and five hundred pounds for the man who takes the young pirate alive."

The young Englishman was within two hundred feet of the old hero, when the latter cried:

"Halt there, Captain Dudley, as we want to palaver with the officer in command."

"Forward!" cried Dudley, pressing on at the same time, "and show no mercy to the confounded pirate scoundrels!"

"Forward!" echoed the young officer in command of the soldiers.

The old hero was listening eagerly, in the hope of hearing cheering words from those who descended to aid his son, yet fearing that their cries may draw the attention of the enemy in that direction.

The black boy and the others had reached the foot of the cliff, but not a word or a cry escaped from them.

Old Paul Jones waited until Captain Dudley was within a hundred feet of him before he sprang behind the jutting rocks, as he cried aloud:

"If you won't palaver, hang you, come on after us and get a dose!"

Seven or eight of the privateers were hiding close by, and the old hero whispered to the nearest man:

"Pass the word to fire when I do, and then out at them."

Captain Dudley and the soldiers were still pressing on in single file, and the former was soon in front of the rock behind which the brave old hero was hiding.

The young English captain was still very excited, yet he commenced to feel that a certain amount of caution was necessary in dealing with such desperate enemies, even though they outnumbered the privateers as three to one.

The soldiers could not perceive the privateers halting on the cliff, and they did not know anything about the mishap to Little Paul Jones.

They were also puzzled at the action of the old hero in making a stand on the narrow pathway, as well as at his sudden disappearance behind the rock.

The officer in command was influenced by Captain Dudley, however, and he pressed on with his men until nearly all the force had passed on by the spot where the little hero had stumbled.

The privateers were anxiously waiting for the signal to fire

out at their foes, yet the old hero hesitated to give it, as he mentally exclaimed:

"Hang me if I don't hate to send so many poor fellows to perdition if it can be helped, and I'll let them march on."

The soldiers did keep on almost as fast as ever, but the officer sent five or six of his men forward to guard against a surprise.

The entrance to the cove on the land side was known only to the smugglers along the coast, while old Paul Jones had posted his friends on board the clipper about its secrets.

Captain Dudley and the young officer became more puzzled as they advanced along the path, as they could not see a trace of their enemies.

When the soldiers disappeared in the darkness the old hero stepped out on the path again and peered anxiously over the side of the cliff as he muttered.

"I'd give my right hand to know how the lad is, and hang me if I don't get down to see him."

He then turned and gave some directions to the men, and concluded by saying:

"Keep still where you are till you hear my signal, but fight like tigers if you are attacked, and the others will be soon with us."

The active old hero then slipped down the side of the cliff, leaving the others behind the jutting rocks.

Before the old man was half-way down a sailor met him, saying:

"I fear the captain is in a bad way, Tom."

A groan escaped from the old hero before he inquired:

"Thunder and lightning; you don't mean to say that he is dead?"

"We can't make out, but he is knocked out bad, and we can't bring him to with the brandy. Donis is chafing his hands, and feeling his heart, but there's not a sign of life in him yet, Tom."

They were both descending, and another groan escaped from the old man, as he muttered aloud in anguish:

"Oh, my Heaven, spare the brave lad to us, as it will be a dark night if he is cut off in his glorious career."

They found Little Paul Jones lying beside a cluster of bushes at the foot of the cliff with his head resting on the black boy's lap.

Hank Carson was kneeling beside his young captain, and striving to force a little brandy down his throat.

Another sigh escaped from the old hero as he knelt beside his son and pressed his ear to his breast, saying:

A joyous expression burst from the negro boy at the moment, and he exclaimed:

"Bless the angels, he is alive, as he just opened his eyes. Oh, captain, captain, you must not die on us."

"Down with more brandy," said the old man, "and he'll soon come to. No bones are broken, and he's only stunned, I hope."

Shouts and yells were heard along the cliff, and the old man sprang to his feet, crying:

"That's our friends from the ship coming to the rescue."

The war-like sounds appeared to revive Little Paul Jones, as he opened his eyes again and muttered aloud:

"Where am I and what's going on? Ah, I now remember the fall."

"Drink more of the brandy, my brave captain," said the anxious father, "and I'll tell you what has happened. Any bones aching?"

The little fellow swallowed a mouthful of the liquor and then pressed his hand to his head as he replied:

"My head pains and I am dizzy. Who are fighting above?"

Old Paul Jones hastened to explain their position, when the little captain said:

"Up with you at once, sir, and take the enemy in the rear. I cannot stand; but leave me here with Donis until you repulse the enemy. At them at once."

The old hero hated to leave his son, but he was compelled to obey the open order.

Hank Carson would give anything to stay and watch over his beloved captain, yet he must not shirk the fight on the cliff, and he was compelled to hasten up with the others.

The sounds of strife increased as the old hero led his men up the steep ascent, and his old fighting blood was fully aroused before he could gain the top, while he said to those near him:

"We'll take the rascals in the rear, and cut our way through to our friends. They are at it hot now, and our lads are forcing them back."

The fresh sailors from the clipper had landed at the cove in force, led on by the second mate.

The signals from the cliffs told the officer that he was to push on toward the town, and he lost no time in obeying them.

Hastening up the secret path, the privateers were out on the cliff before the soldiers had gained the point, and the first challenge told the enemies that a struggle was before them.

Captain Dudley and the military officer exchanged only a few words, when the latter called a halt.

The front files had then gained an open space on the cliff, where about fifty men could form in line for action in double column.

Toward the ocean the rocks rose above the plateau, while a steep descent appeared on the other side.

The soldiers had not fully formed for the fight when the impetuous privateers dashed at them, their leader yelling in French:

"At them, lads, and on to the rescue of our brave young captain."

The privateers dashed to the plateau without waiting to count their foes, and the soldiers in the front rank sent a volley at them.

The sailors returned the fire with their pistols at shorter range, and then closed with the cold steel, their leader shouting:

"Cut through them, brave Frenchmen, and on to the rescue of our captain."

Most of the sailors were veterans well accustomed to boarding the ships of the enemy, and they could use their weapons with fearful effect in that close struggle.

The soldiers had never been engaged in battle before, and they soon gave way before the daring privateers.

As they could not retreat along the crowded path, many of the survivors flung down their guns, and darted down the steep ascent, while the sailors flung or forced others down after them, still forcing their way to the path, where only two men at most could fight abreast.

Captain Dudley fought like a furious madman, calling on the soldiers to follow his example, until he received a blow on the side of the head from a cutlass, which sent him sprawling down the steep side.

The young officer was slain at the first onset, and his second in command was hurled down, when a wild shout was heard in the rear, followed by several pistol shots.

The soldiers in the narrow path then pressed forward to the plateau, some of them crying:

"We are attacked from behind!"

A fearful panic then ensued among the demoralized troops. Those who pushed on to the plateau were either slain or

hurled down the steep side, while those in the rear were attacked with great fury by the old hero and his men.

Fearing or forgetting to call out for quarter, the panic-stricken soldiers in the path flung down their guns and dashed down the steep descent in the darkness, and the old hero and his party pressed on until they reached the open plateaus, their leader crying in French:

"Welcome, brave friends. If the coast is clear this way to the rescue of our captain."

The old hero held a hurried consultation with the mate, when it was decided to bear their helpless young captain away to the clipper as soon as possible.

A strong party was pushed on in front to keep back any enemies coming from the town, and old Paul Jones led another strong force down a path not very far from the spot where his son had fallen over.

Even in the darkness the old hero and Hank had noted the spot where they had left their helpless captain, and they pressed on ahead of the others.

They were not more than fifty yards from the bushes when two pistol shots rang out ahead, followed by a loud cry of alarm.

Hank Carson and the old man darted on at full speed, the former crying:

"Hang me, if some of the cowardly runaways haven't struck foul of the captain. On to the rescue, French lads!"

Yells of rage burst from the privateers as they heard another cry of distress, and they dashed forward on the run.

The old hero was the first to reach the spot where he had left his son, when he halted and stared around, crying:

"Captain, Donis, where are you?"

A faint cry in the distance was the answer, and the old man darted away in the direction, yelling:

"After them, lads, and signal to those on the cliffs to follow us. We'll rescue our captain if we have to take the town."

CHAPTER V.

THE LITTLE HERO AND HIS ENEMY.

Little Paul Jones attempted to sit up when his father and the others left him, while he said to the negro boy:

"What a child I must be. I must make an effort to get to the strife."

The faithful negro supported the young fellow, who staggered like a drunken man, only to sink on the ground again.

Donis was still supporting his young captain as he said to him:

"For mercy sake, brave captain, do not attempt to move until the men come, as you are too weak."

The little captain groaned with suspense, listening to the sounds of the conflict on the cliff as he answered:

"Perdition take the stumbling block that sent me here helpless while my brave men are fighting the enemy."

"Good captain," answered Donis, "your brave men will soon defeat the enemy and bear you away to the ship."

"I fear not, as more troops from the town will come out. Assist me to rise again, and a little more brandy."

The captain made several attempts at moving, but his efforts were in vain.

Every shot and cry coming from the cliffs added to his agony, until he fell into another stupor, muttering:

"I paid him in part, but I'll meet him on the sea again."

The little negro fondled his head in his lap and kissed the pale lips of the insensible youth as he muttered:

"Oh, would that I could thus watch over him in France! The conflict is dying out and I pray that our friends may be the victors. Who comes here?"

The lad perceived six or seven dark forms gliding along at the foot of the cliff, and he drew a pistol from the young captain's belt as he cried out in French:

"Who comes there?"

The forms halted on hearing the voice, and then advanced again.

"Who comes there?" again cried the little negro. "Speak or I will fire."

"At them, men," cried a voice that sounded somewhat familiar to Donis, "as there are only two of them."

The men thus moving along at the foot of the cliff were some of the retreating soldiers led on by Captain Dudley.

That young sailor had escaped with only a slight cut on the side of the head, and he was hastening back to the town for reinforcements.

The soldiers made a dash at the two enemies, when Donis let fly at them with the young captain's pistols, springing to his feet at the same time.

One of the soldiers fell, but the others kept on until Captain Dudley encountered the little negro, who stood in front of his young captain, and waving a cutlass as he cried:

"Back and fight men, you cowards!"

The pistol shots had aroused the little hero from his stupor, as he struggled to his feet and cried out:

"Boarders to the deck of the enemy! Spare all who surrender."

"By heavens, it is the little pirate," yelled Captain Dudley, as he struck aside the cutlass in the hands of the negro boy. "Seize the scoundrel, and away with him. I will have my revenge to-night."

The little negro yelled in alarm, and attacked the soldiers who rushed to seize his helpless young captain, crying:

"Cowards—cowards, why will you attack my helpless captain!"

A yell of rage burst from one of the soldiers as he received a blow of the cutlass in the hands of the little negro, and Captain Dudley turned on Donis and disarmed him, as he cried:

"Secure that little fiend, and drag them both along. This capture makes up for our mishap on the cliff, and we'll take the whole pirate crew before morning. Down to the road with them, and then away with one of you for aid in all haste."

Little Paul Jones was half stupefied as they forced him along, while the negro lad struggled and fought like a little fiend with the two soldiers who held him, yelling aloud the while when he heard the old boatswain calling on him.

Captain Dudley heard the old privateer, also, and he ordered the men to gag the prisoners.

The old hero pushed on, with fifty men close behind him, and they soon reached the high road running to the town.

Feeling sure that the young captain and Donis could not be far ahead, the old man kept on, leaving some of the soldiers behind to bring on the others, and sending up signals and whistles at the same time.

The privateers reached a point within half a mile of the town, when a rumbling sound was heard in front, and the old captain halted his men, saying:

"There's a large force of troops coming out against us, and we must fall back on the others for the present."

The privateers did fall back on the run, old Paul Jones saying:

"Don't despair, lads, as we'll rescue the captain yet, if we

had to cut him out from the jail in the town; but we must use a little strategy against the rascals."

Although the privateers ran very fast the galloping troops gained on them, and old Paul Jones could soon tell that their fresh enemies were coming in full force.

He was also confident that all the English force in the neighborhood would soon be down on them and attempt to cut them off from the boats in the cove.

Much as he loved his son, old Paul Jones could not think of risking the safety of the whole crew of the clipper in a mad attempt at rescuing him, and he did not lose his presence of mind in that critical crisis.

He was soon joined by the force under the mate, and the united party made a hasty retreat to the cove, taking two English officers as prisoners with them.

The troopers could not pursue them on horseback along the cliffs, and the privateers gained the clipper outside with only four men wounded in the late struggle.

Every man and officer on board the privateer deplored the fate of their gallant young captain, and they vowed to rescue him at the earliest moment possible.

Old Paul Jones confided in the first mate of the Clipper that night, and that officer not only agreed to keep his secret, but to follow the old hero's instructions as to the working of the ship and the crew, until the little captain assumed command again.

The ship was headed down the coast, and Hank Carson and two other sailors were sent on shore as spies, being disguised so as to appear as smugglers or fishermen, as occasion required.

The Clipper then stood out to sea, only to return to the coast on the following night.

Two of the sailor spies then returned to the ship to report that they could gain no intelligence, in the town or elsewhere, regarding their young captain or the black boy.

Hank Carson did not return to report that night.

The clipper put off to sea again before daylight on the following morning, old Paul Jones saying to the first mate:

"I fear my boy is the victim of treachery, but we must keep away from this coast for two or three days, and strike elsewhere, in order to draw off the two English frigates coming to the harbor. Then we will return and rescue the lads, if they are living, or avenge them if they have met with foul play."

In the meantime Little Paul Jones and Donis were in the power of human fiends.

Captain Dudley had smuggled the helpless prisoners away to his father's castle, and he bribed the soldiers who aided him to keep silent on the subject.

On the night after the clipper's last visit to the coast, the little captain was chained to a post in a deep dungeon of the castle, and the brutal young Englishman was standing near him, with a large whip in his right hand.

Little Paul Jones was stripped to the waist, his hands were secured above his head, and heavy manacles were attached to his feet.

The brave youth's face was as pale as a corpse, and his frame shook with indignation only, while his dark eyes were flashing with rage.

The little negro was crouching in a corner of the dungeon, with his arms bound behind him, and he was sobbing in a violent manner.

Two rough-looking fellows stood at the open door of the dungeon, and they grinned with delight when Captain Dudley raised the whip to lay on to his helpless victim, while he cried:

"Now, you young cub of a pirate, I will give you the first

taste of the punishment in store for you, and I will lash you to death before I am through with you."

The whip was raised aloft, and it was about to fall on the young hero's naked back, when the men at the door were flung aside, and a young girl burst into the dungeon, crying:

"Stay your arm, you inhuman wretch! Mercy on me, are you mad, Charles Dudley, or what is the meaning of this outrage?"

While thus declaring, the young girl tore the whip from Captain Dudley's hand, and she then turned to stare at the young prisoner before she continued:

"As I live, it is Captain Paul Jones! Oh, shame, shame, Charles Dudley, to treat a young gentleman, even if he is an enemy, in such a base and cruel manner!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE ANGEL OF THE DUNGEON.

Captain Dudley drew back a few steps on the sudden appearance of the young girl, and he held his head down for a few moments without replying to her denunciations.

The little negro crawled over to the young girl and kissed the skirt of her dress as he sobbingly exclaimed:

"You are a bright angel in this dark dungeon, beautiful lady, and I will worship you forever if you will save my dear captain."

The girl smiled down at the boy as she remarked:

"I remember you, Donis. Captain Jones, how came you in the power of— Mercy on me, he is dead or in a swoon. Captain Dudley, order those fellows to release the young gentleman, and the world will hear of your baseness from me! Oh, uncle, uncle, you do not countenance such cruelty!"

The question was addressed to a stern-looking old man who had just entered the dungeon, and who was Lord Dudley, old Paul Jones' ancient enemy.

The old lord scowled at the young girl as he responded, in very sharp tones:

"What in thunder brought you down here, Maud? This is no place for you, and away with you at once."

The young girl cast an indignant glance at her uncle as she exclaimed, pointing to the insensible prisoner at the same time:

"Do you ask me to leave that unfortunate young gentleman to the mercy of your own son, who was about to lash him like a dog when I interfered?"

"You shall not interfere in what does not concern you, and you must leave this place. That prisoner is a brutal pirate who grossly assaulted my son, and he will receive the punishment he deserves. Come with me, Maud."

While thus speaking the old lord seized the young girl by the arm, and attempted to drag her from the dungeon.

Donis crawled after the young girl as he cried in piteous tones:

"Oh, you good angel, do not desert my dear captain, or that cruel wretch will lash him to death."

Maud broke away from the old lord's grasp and sprang to the side of the prisoner, as she cried:

"Is it possible that you will treat a French gentleman as you would one of your hounds? Must I go forth from your castle, Lord Dudley, and declare to the world that Captain Paul Jones, commander of the French privateer Scorpion, is a prisoner in your dungeon, and that I detected your son in the act of lashing him as if he were a slave in the West Indies."

The old lord stamped with rage and glared at the girl as he demanded:

"How did you know about the prisoner, and what brought you down here?"

"I heard a rumor to the effect that a mysterious prisoner was confined down here, sir, and curiosity prompted me to follow Charles to-night. I am glad that I interrupted him in his cruel work."

"Then you will suffer for your curiosity, silly girl. You rascals, seize the young lady and I will show you where to place her in safe keeping."

The rough fellows sprang to seize the girl, while she struggled with them and cried:

"Uncle, Lord Dudley, will you dare to treat me as you would a smuggler or a poacher?"

"Remember that I am your guardian, silly girl, and you are in my power for more than a year to come. You threaten to denounce us for dealing with that young pirate as he deserves, but I will see that you are placed where you cannot work any mischief until you swear to obey me."

With a violent effort the young girl burst away from those who held her, and dashed out of the dungeon, crying:

"Wicked, cruel wretches, I will escape from you and fly to the town to denounce you!"

Donis sprang to his feet with his arms free, and darted after the young girl, crying:

"And I will after the beautiful angel to bring brave hearts to the rescue of my dear young captain."

Lord Dudley and his son darted out after the young girl and the negro boy, the former crying:

"Seize them, seize them! Out to the gate with you, Charles, and pursue them if they escape from the castle."

The young girl darted along some dark passages until she reached a stone stairway, and the little negro kept close behind her, crying:

"Good angel, I hear the rustling of your silk robe, and I will follow you in the darkness. Guide me from this place to save my dear captain, and I will worship you."

"Follow me, Donis, and we will save him," answered the girl, as she sprang up the stairs.

"A lantern this way, you fellows!" yelled Lord Dudley, as he stumbled along the dark passage with his son. "Charles, they must not escape, or we will be balked in our vengeance."

"The gates are all closed, sir, and they cannot escape from the castle."

"Yes, yes, as it is after nine. Yet hasten to seize them ere they expose us to the servants. That silly girl must never be set at liberty save as your wife."

The two rough fellows who had been keeping guard at the door of the dungeon soon appeared in the passage with a lantern, and they all sprang up the stone stairway.

Another bright lantern was left in the dungeon with the young prisoner, and the iron door was left open, with a bunch of keys in the lock.

Little Paul Jones was still very weak from the effects of the fall down the cliff, and he had swooned with agitation at the moment when the young girl appeared on the scene.

About five minutes after the others left the dungeon the little negro reached his own cabin, and he could then hear whispered voices close by him, as well as feel hands at work on the manacles on his legs.

On looking down the prisoner exclaimed:

"Charles, my friend, who is that with you?"

"It is an angel, good captain. It is a girl, and she will save you. It is Miss Vernon, the sweet young lady who was a prisoner on the big ship we captured last week. She has saved you from your cruel enemy, and she will set you free."

"May Heaven guard you forever, Miss Vernon," gasped the young sailor.

"Hush, hush, and muster all your strength," responded Maud. "You are free from the chains now, and out with us. They may return here at any moment, as they are busy searching for us in the castle now, and we gave them the slip to return to your aid."

They were all out in the passage, when a loud voice was heard, crying:

"Rascals, why didn't you lock the door on the prisoner?"

"It is Lord Dudley!" gasped Maud, as she drew the young sailor back in the passage. "Let us hide back here and we may escape."

Donis slipped back with the others, and the old lord soon appeared at the door of the dungeon with the two rough fellows.

The little negro had secured the lantern left in the dungeon, and he was holding it under his jacket.

"Lord Dudley strode into the dark dungeon, as he cried:

"Quick, in here with the lantern."

The two men ran into the dungeon, one of them flashing the lantern, while the old lord yelled out in furious tones:

"Treachery, treachery! Some scoundrel has released the prisoner!"

"I am that scoundrel, Lord Dudley!" cried the heroic girl, as she banged the iron door on those inside and turned the key in the strong lock. "You are a prisoner now, and I will save your intended victim, while I will also go forth to denounce you as a merciless tyrant and a base man."

CHAPTER VII.

IN A STRANGE HIDING-PLACE.

Lord Dudley fumed and yelled like a madman on finding himself locked up in his own dungeon, but his voice could scarcely be heard outside the iron door.

The two rough fellows flung themselves in turn against the strong door, but Maud drew a heavy bolt outside also, as she said to the young sailor:

"They are safe for some time, and now come with me."

The young girl led the way up the steps and then out into a small courtyard, as she whispered to the young sailor:

"You see that the castle is alarmed, and the gates must be closed. If we could but gain Lady Dudley's apartment, she would protect you, as she is a noble lady."

"Is there no secret exit by which we could escape, young lady?" inquired the young sailor.

"I don't know of any, as I am almost a stranger here. If I could but find a safe hiding-place for you and Donis, I would steal up to Lady Dudley, who is an invalid, and she would advise me."

While thus speaking the young girl cast her eyes around the small courtyard, drawing the others under the shadow of a wall at the same time.

Then she bounded forward toward a small open door leading into the castle, as she whispered to the young sailor:

"Follow me, as this door may lead up into the right wing, where I can find the good lady."

Donis had put on the young captain's upper garments before leaving the dungeon, and the bright buttons on his coat glittered under the lights gleaming from the castle windows.

Forms were moving to and fro across the windows, doors were banging, and loud voices could be heard throughout the vast building.

The good girl led the way on up into the left wing of the castle, where all was in darkness.

She then felt her way along until she reached an open door, holding the young sailor by the hand as she whispered to him:

"We will enter here, as it is evident that they are busy looking for me elsewhere."

The little negro followed the others into the apartment, still bearing the lantern under his jacket.

Closing the door the young girl said:

"Throw a little light out here, Donis, and let us see where we are."

The little negro flashed the light around the apartment, when they could perceive that they were in a large wardrobe without a window, where several suits of uniform and other garments were hanging around on the walls.

After glancing carefully around, Maud bent her earnest gaze on the young sailor as she inquired:

"Do you feel strong enough to face some trials now?"

The young fellow smiled and stretched his arms aloft as he answered:

"I feel as strong as a giant now, and I only wish that we had to fight our way out."

"That would be madness. Lord Dudley has over fifty armed retainers in the castle, and they are all devoted to him. I will get you weapons, however, as soon as possible. What have we in here?"

The young girl opened a closet at the side of the wardrobe, and a joyous exclamation escaped from the young sailor as he saw that it was full of swords, muskets, and pistols.

He was hastening to select weapons, when Maud interrupted him, saying:

"Put aside your coat, and put on a garment that will not attract attention."

A playful smile passed over the young girl's face as she looked at Donis, saying:

"I fear that it will not be so easy to disguise you, Donis, and you will pardon me for saying that you must cover your face as much as possible."

"I will hide my black face forever if it will please you, good angel," answered the negro boy.

Acting under the young girl's advice each of the escaped prisoners hastened to disguise themselves, while she stood near the door on the watch.

They were both soon arrayed in suits of garments worn by the retainers of the castle, and they had secured small swords and pistols as well.

Little Paul Jones was delighted on finding that the pistols were loaded, and he said to the young girl:

"I now feel that I am not helpless."

"For mercy's sake do not use the firearms!" pleaded the young girl, "except in the last extremity."

"I will obey you in all things. Now, what would you advise?"

Maud was casting her eyes around on the garments at the moment, and she smiled and pointed to the closet before she replied:

"Go in there and I will assume a disguise also. As followers of the castle we may pass on to the right wing without being noticed."

Leaving the lantern in the wardrobe, Little Paul Jones and Donis retreated into the closet, closing the door after them.

In less than ten minutes after a merry voice outside said to them:

"Come out now and behold the transformation."

The young sailor and the negro boy started in amazement at the young girl's appearance, and the former exclaimed in a half-frenzied tone:

"May perdition take me if you have not worked a miracle, and who could recognize you in those garments?"

The young girl smiled, as she replied:

"I have appeared in private theatricals in India, and I am at home, as it were, in disguising myself."

The young girl was tall for her age, and she readily found a suit of male attire that fitted her very well.

Her dark hair was gathered up under a slouched hat, which was pulled down over her forehead, while the collar of the coat was drawn up above her chin.

The garments chosen by all of the fugitives were those worn by the regular retainers of the castle, Donis taking good care to hide his black face as much as possible.

Being thus equipped, the young girl said to the others:

"Before we proceed further, I must tell you my position here. You are aware, Captain Jones, that Lord Dudley is my mother's brother and my guardian, and that I am the daughter of an English officer who recently died in India?"

"I learned as much, young lady, when I was unfortunate enough to capture the ship in which you were returning here to England."

"That was unfortunate for the owners of the ship, sir, but the passengers on board were most thankful to you for your extreme courtesy and kindness, and I cannot forget that you risked so much in landing us safely so near my own destination."

"We are French privateers, young lady, but we are not pirates, as Captain Dudley has styled me."

"Captain Dudley is a brutal wretch, and I fear that his father is not much better. My sympathies are all with my own people in this war, of course, but I do believe in fair treatment for our foes. You must know that Lord Dudley threatened me with severe punishment for my interference to-night, and, as he has certain power over me for the present, I must leave this castle also."

"But cannot the good Lady Dudley protect you?"

"As I told you, Lady Dudley is an invalid, and she has little power, yet I feel that she would aid us if we could gain her ear. I propose that you remain here while I steal forth and endeavor to pay her a visit in her chamber."

The young sailor shrugged his shoulders as he responded:

"I prefer to go with you, young lady."

Maud reflected a few moments, and then looked at Donis as she replied:

"You can risk coming with me, captain, but it would be safer for Donis to remain here and hide in that closet."

The black boy objected, declaring that he would not leave his young captain, but the young officer silenced him, saying:

"You must obey the young lady, as she knows what is best for us all."

Leaving the black boy in the closet, the others stole forth and moved cautiously toward the right wing of the castle.

On gaining the main building, where lights were burning in the halls and passages, and where male and female servants were moving around as if in search of some one, Maud whispered to her companion, saying:

"Let us move boldly forward now, and you follow me wherever I lead."

The young girl led the way and the young sailor followed her example in every particular.

The disguised young girl appeared to be engaged in the search also, but she soon reached the right wing of the castle, where none of the servants appeared at the time.

She then paused before the door of a bedroom, and bent her ear to listen at the keyhole before she turned and whispered to her companion, on

"Move to and fro while I enter here. I will soon be back with you again."

About ten minutes after entering the bedroom, Maud appeared at the door, and beckoned to the young sailor to enter, when she whispered to him, saying:

"I have explained our position to good Lady Dudley, and she has promised to aid us as well as she can."

On entering the large bedroom, Little Paul Jones could perceive an old lady reclining on a large curtained bed, with her head raised on pillows.

They had scarcely advanced toward the bedside when a loud voice was heard in the hallway, crying:

"She must have sought refuge in my lady mother's apartments, and we will look for her there."

Maud started in affright when the old lady pointed her finger toward the heavy curtains at the head of the bed as she said in subdued tones:

"Hide there with the young gentleman."

Seizing Paul by the hand, Maud dragged him behind the curtains as she whispered:

"Trust to the good lady, and she will save us yet."

The fugitives had scarcely taken a position behind the curtains when Captain Dudley burst into the apartment, crying:

"Dear mother, have you seen anything of Maud Vernon?"

The old lady glared at her son in an angry manner as she retorted:

"How dare you burst into my apartment in this manner, sir? Do you not see that the young lady is not here? What is the cause of all this uproar?"

Before the young man could answer Lord Dudley strode into the room and exclaimed in excited tones:

"Maud Vernon and the prisoners must be concealed in the castle yet. We have searched every apartment except this. Did you see anything of my niece lately, Lady Dudley?"

A deep groan escaped from the invalid, and she gasped forth:

"You will be the death of me if you trouble me any more. Oh, where can I have peace to die. Get you away from here, or I will expire this instant."

Loud voices were heard outside in the hallway at the moment, and a male servant then appeared at the door of the bedroom, crying:

"My Lord, we have found the little black rascal off in the left wing."

"Then the others cannot be far away," cried Lord Dudley, as he sprang to the door, followed by his son, "and we will torture the little fiend until he tells us where they are hiding."

"Poor Donis!" mentally exclaimed Little Paul Jones.

Captain Dudley closed the door of the bedroom after him, and Maud Vernon sprang out from her hiding-place and bent over the invalid, saying:

"Oh, aunt, dear aunt, what can I do to save the poor negro boy from being tortured?"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BLACK BOY'S ORDEAL.

Poor Donis was struggling in the grasp of the two rough men who had appeared in the dungeon, and they were dragging him in through the lower hallway when Lord Dudley and his son appeared on the scene.

Lord Dudley glared at the little fellow for a moment or so, and he then ordered the men to follow him with the prisoner.

The excited old nobleman hastened down to a large apart-

ment on the first floor of the castle, which was used as a court of justice.

Lord Dudley was a magistrate, and he had certain power over criminals, which power he often abused when dealing with the unfortunates who fell into his hands.

Captain Dudley followed the prisoner and the others into the courtroom, closing and bolting the door after him, as if to keep out intruders.

Lord Dudley took his seat in the chair of justice and ordered the little prisoner to be brought to the iron railing in front of him.

After scowling at the little fellow for a few moments, Lord Dudley commenced:

"You black villain, are you aware that I have the power to flay you alive?"

"Yes, sir," was the black boy's quiet reply.

"Then tell me what has become of your captain and the young lady, or the whip will be applied to you on the instant.

While thus speaking Lord Dudley stared at some instruments of torture in the shape of cords and whips which were hanging on nails at the side of the courtroom.

Captain Dudley sprang to seize the large whip, and he then flourished it over the head of the little victim, while Lord Dudley continued, crying:

"Tell me where the young lady and the captain are, you little black imp, or you will be lashed until you cry for mercy."

"I swear to you that I cannot tell where they are, sir. In mercy, do not lash me, as I cannot bear such cruel punishment."

The boy's voice was very soft and pleading while thus appealing for mercy, but those who were dealing with him were not affected by it.

At a signal from the old lord the lash was about to fall, when the little fellow slipped out of the grasp of those who held him and darted toward an open window as he exclaimed in tremulous tones:

"I will die before I feel the lash!"

Donis sprang up on the high window and cast one glance down into the deep moat beneath before he turned to his tormentors, crying:

"Dark death stares me in the face, you monsters, but I will welcome it ere I betray my brave captain or the young lady."

"Stop—stop!" cried Lord Dudley. "It is certain death to spring from that window into the moat. You little black fool, we were only trying you."

Captain Dudley made a spring toward the high window and attempted to seize the little fellow by the leg, when Donis drew his foot back and sent it out again suddenly, kicking the young officer between the eyes, and sending him sprawling back on the floor.

A yell of rage burst from the old lord, and he cried to the rough fellows:

"Seize the young imp, as he has not the courage to face death as he threatens."

The two men sprang at the window to seize the boy's legs, when he sprang out into the darkness, crying:

"The Lord have mercy on me."

A wild shriek was then heard, followed by a splash in the dark water of the moat.

Lord Dudley and his son ran to the window, the former crying:

"Down with you and drag the little imp out of the water, dead or alive."

Captain Dudley sprang out to obey the order, followed by the two rough fellows.

Lord Dudley stared out of the window until he saw torches flashing in the darkness below him, and he cried out:

"Some of you get over on the other side, as the little imp may escape that way."

"We have him, sir," yelled Captain Dudley, in reply.

"Is he dead or alive?"

"He is insensible at least, sir."

"Then bring him up here and do not raise any more alarm than is necessary."

Donis was gasping for breath when his tormentors bore him into the room again, Captain Dudley saying:

"The little rascal can swim, sir, but he would have perished if we had not dragged him out of the moat."

"Then he will perish in another way," responded the cruel old nobleman. "If he does not promptly answer the questions I will put to him."

The old lord then ordered his son to give the boy a little brandy as he continued:

"I see that he has left his mark on you, Charles, and you will not spare him if he continues to refuse."

A large lump was rising on the young man's forehead, and a fearful scowl appeared on his face as he answered:

"I will not spare the little fiend, sir."

Donis revived after swallowing a little of the brandy, and he cast his eyes at the window again as he gasped forth:

"Would that I had perished, and I will die before I betray my young captain and the sweet angel who saved him from the cruel lash."

"Then try the lash on him!" cried the old lord in fierce tones, "and do not spare him until I stay your hand!"

Captain Dudley raised the heavy whip again, and it was about to fall on the little black boy when a small door behind the old lord was flung open, and a ghostly figure staggered out to the side of his chair, while a shrill voice cried out:

"What cruel work is this here? Stay your hand, Charles, or I will disown you!"

The old lord turned on the ghostly figure as he exclaimed:

"You here, Lady Dudley, when you complained of dying a short time ago?"

"If I were dead, my lord, my ghost would appear to stop this cruel work. What crime did that poor black boy commit that you should lash him as you would one of your unruly hounds?"

The invalid staggered and sank into her husband's armchair as she spoke, the old lord assisting her to the seat as he replied:

"This is no place for you, wife, and you must let me lead you back to your chamber."

The good lady shook herself as if arousing her latent energies, and she cast a scornful glance at her husband as she retorted:

"I will not leave here until you swear to me not to torture that poor black boy. What crime has he committed that you should lash him?"

"He is a pirate, and he assisted his captain in assaulting my son."

"My captain fought your son in fair combat, sir," cried the little negro, "and he only served him as your cruel son deserved. Good lady, that vile wretch there assaulted my brave young captain in America in the most gross manner, and he was only retaliating."

"Silence, you young imp," thundered Lord Dudley. "Madam, do you know what has become of my niece and the young pirate captain who escaped from the dungeon through her instrumentality?"

"I do know where they are, sir."

"Where are they then?"

"They are safe on their way to the coast by this time, as I

directed them to the secret passage leading out from my chamber to the graveyard."

A yell of rage burst from the old lord, and his son re-echoed it, while they both stamped with rage at the same time.

Lord Dudley then turned to the two rough fellows as he cried:

"Take that young wretch down to the dungeon and secure him in one of the strongest cells. Charles, out with you after the fugitives, and take all the force you can command with you."

The two men were dragging the little black boy from the room, when Lady Dudley staggered from the chair and confronted them, crying:

"Leave that boy with me, fellows. I am mistress of this castle in my own right, and I will be obeyed, Lord Dudley; woe be to you and to your son if you oppose me and torture this poor boy, as I am pledged to protect him."

The rough fellows knew that Lady Dudley was mistress of the castle and the broad grounds around it, and they feared to oppose her.

They released their grasp on Donis, who sprang to kneel before the old lady, as he exclaimed:

"Oh, lady, lady, you are another good angel, and I will adore you also."

Lord Dudley was foaming with rage, but he dare not oppose the resolute invalid, and he rushed out of the apartment, crying:

"Come on, you fellows, and we will out in quest of the fugitives."

On reaching the hallway the old lord turned and addressed one of the men in whispered tones, saying:

"You two fellows keep watch outside and seize that black young imp when he leaves the castle."

Lady Dudley motioned to the black boy to rise as she said to him:

"Let me lean on you and come through this door. I will protect you, my poor fellow."

"May heaven bless you, good lady. And are you the other angel's mother?"

"If you allude to Miss Vernon, I am only her aunt by marriage, but I already love her as if she were my own daughter, my boy."

"And can it be possible that Captain Dudley is your son, noble lady?"

"Captain Dudley is only my stepson. Alas! Once I had a dear little boy, but he was stolen from me when he was only two years old, and I have mourned for him ever since."

"That is very sad. Is it true that Captain Jones and Miss Vernon have left the castle?"

"It is true. The young officer said that he would wait for you at a certain cove. I will direct you how to leave the castle, and you can then hasten to meet him, but you must be careful to avoid those who may prowl outside."

CHAPTER IX.

TO GAIN THE COAST.

Lady Dudley had spoken the truth when she said that Paul and Maud had escaped to the graveyard through a secret passage leading from the castle.

The passage opened out in an old vault, the door of which was not secured, and the young people found themselves in the deserted graveyard.

Paul stood awhile as if in doubt which way to turn, sniffing the air in the meantime, before he said

"The coast is to the right, and I propose that we go in that direction, providing that you cannot find a shelter with some friends."

"I have no friends in this neighborhood save Lady Dudley, and I scarcely know which way to turn."

Paul felt like offering the young girl a safe refuge on board the Clipper, but he knew that it would be out of place altogether, and he kept silent.

Maud Vernon was a vigorous girl, and she could outstep the young sailor in the journey to the coast, as he was still suffering from his mishap and the excitement of the night.

They soon struck out on an open road leading to the town, from whence they could see the high cliffs and hear the waves dashing against the rocks.

Not being acquainted with the country, they did not take a direct path to the cove, yet they managed to reach the point and the path where the old hero had descended to find that his son had disappeared.

After gaining the high cliff they paused again, and Maud cast her eye toward the town as she said:

"I presume money will find me shelter there in some hotel. My purse is not empty, and this disguise will save me from prying eyes."

Paul Jones could not object to the proposal, and he offered his hand to the young lady, as he said to her in pathetic tones:

"May Heaven reward you for your kindness to me to-night, Miss Vernon; and I can only pray that we may meet again when the war is over. Would that I could offer you a fitting refuge to-night, but a smuggler's cave must be my shelter until my good ship appears off the coast again."

Before thus speaking, Little Paul Jones cast a wistful gaze over the sea, and a sigh had escaped from him when he could not perceive a sail in sight.

The merry girl, who was very romantic in her way, smiled pleasantly as she pressed the young fellow's hand in turn, and she inquired:

"Where is the smuggler's cave?"

"It is not more than half a mile along the coast here."

"Will you meet any friends there?"

"I think not, as the smugglers who use it as a hiding place are dispersed at present, and I expect to be alone there, unless my officers have left some of the crew behind to watch for me."

"Then I will see you safe to the cave, and I will then find a shelter in one of the farm-houses in the valley."

Paul was delighted at the proposition, merely because he desired the young lady's company as long as possible.

On reaching the secret entrance to the cave the young sailor did not hesitate about opening a concealed door behind a rock in the presence of the young girl.

He then led the way down the stone steps as he remarked:

"We will find food and wine here in plenty, and I feel that we will be safe from intrusion."

"How romantic it is," answered Maud, as she glanced up at the high rocks on each side of the winding steps, "and I do not wonder that the revenue officers have not discovered this nest of the smugglers."

"The person who guided us here knew the place when he was only a boy, and that is more than forty years ago. Who have we here?"

They had entered a large cave just above the hidden cave, when a lamp was burning, when Paul perceived a form lying on the floor in the corner.

The young man sprang to his feet on the instant, with a dagger in one hand and a pistol in the other, as he cried:

"Who are you?"

"A friend," answered Paul. "Oh, Hank Carson, I am delighted to meet you."

The young sailor sprang forward to salute his captain as he cried:

"Blow my eyes, captain, if I knew you in those togs, and I came near letting fly at you. And who is this with you?"

"A true friend, Hank. Any more of you lads around, and where is the ship?"

"The ship is standing off, but she will be here to-morrow night, captain, if those frigates in the harbor are called away, as they are bound to be, for I know that the Scorpion is bound to play the mischief along the coast."

"Any of the other lads around?"

"I think not, sir. I have been knocking around the town and the country since you disappeared, but I could not find a trace of you."

Maud Vernon then drew the young sailor aside and said to him:

"As you have found a friend here, I will away to the town, or find some shelter in the neighborhood."

"Then we will escort you to that shelter, Miss Vernon."

Maud protested in the most vehement manner, but Paul was obstinate, and he carried his point.

The three young people were soon out on the cliffs again, and they made their way toward the town.

They had gained the point where Paul had met with a mishap when four men sprang suddenly out on them from behind a rock, one of them crying:

"Disarm them all, but do not injure them if it can be avoided."

The speaker was Captain Dudley, and he assailed Paul with his sword on the instant.

Though taken by surprise, the young sailors had no idea of surrendering without a desperate struggle.

The brave girl did not utter a cry to betray herself, but she retreated a few steps along the narrow path.

Hank Carson had his pistol ready for use, and he fired at one of his assailants as he cried:

"Strike home, brave captain, and we can down these rascals in short order."

The man fired at uttered a cry of pain and staggered on the path to fall over on the land side.

Hank Carson then took a stand on the narrow path beside the young captain, and they both defended themselves with swords, Little Paul Jones crying:

"Captain Dudley, I meet you once again, and I will show you once more that I am your master with the sword."

A cry of rage burst from the young Englishman as his weapon was dashed from his grasp, Hank Carson giving his opponent a severe blow on the head at the same time.

A cry of alarm then burst from the excited girl and she exclaimed:

"Mercy on me, others are coming along behind us! Force your way through those in front and gain the hiding place."

Paul Jones and Hank Carson struck down those who opposed them in front and dashed back toward the cave.

They had not proceeded far when they perceived several dark forms in the path before them, and the young girl cried:

"We are surrounded, and see those rascals down below as well. Oh, what will you do, Captain Jones?"

CHAPTER X.

THE SMUGGLER'S DAUGHTER.

Donis managed to get out of the castle into the graveyard, and his warm heart was glowing with gratitude for Lady Dudley, who had parted with him in her bedroom, saying:

"My poor boy, if you should meet Miss Maud Vernon to-night, tell her from me that she must try and keep out of Lord Dudley's clutches until she is of age. Here it a purse for her, and you may use the money, if you need it, should you not meet her."

The grateful negro could only answer by kissing the invalid's gown and sobbing forth:

"All the ladies here are angels, and poor Donis will worship them while he lives."

Having reached the lonely graveyard through the secret passage from the castle, the negro boy turned toward the sea, muttering:

"I have a sword and two pistols, and I will use them if I am assailed. Captain Paul must be at the cave now, and I wonder if the young lady is still with him?"

A deep sigh escaped from the boy as he faced toward the sea, yet he kept on the alert, as he was aware that Lord Dudley's retainers were out in force after his beloved captain.

Before reaching the road he had to pass through a small wood, and Donis was extremely cautious in his movements, stealing along through the trees in a crouching attitude, while he said to himself:

"This is just the spot for an ambush, and I can feel that prowlers are near."

The black boy heard a cracking sound ahead of him a moment after, and he turned suddenly and darted on to the right, grasping one of the pistols, as he muttered:

"I feel that they were in ambush for me, and I will fly until I am compelled to fight."

The negro boy ran on through the wood as fast as he could, and he could hear heavy footsteps hastening after him.

The sounds added to the fugitive's speed, and the active little fellow darted along as if pursued by slave-dealers in the forests of Africa, while he kept muttering:

"I hate to stay a human being, but I must escape to the dear captain, and I will use the pistols if they close on me."

The two rough fellows, who had acted as jailers in the dungeon, were pursuing the black boy, and they were gaining on him every moment.

The little fellow gained an open field, however, some thirty yards ahead of his pursuers, and he then darted on faster, making for the high road beyond, as he kept muttering:

"If I can but get to the cliffs I will turn and defy them, though I do hate to shed blood."

Donis had sense enough not to keep long on the high road, and he soon leaped a wall and made for the cliffs.

His pursuers were not gaining on him in the open race, as the little negro could run like a young colt on the level ground.

The pursuers had remained silent up to that point, and they were drawing near the cliff, when shots and cries ahead told Donis that he must change his course.

He could also perceive dark forms gliding along at the foot of the cliffs, and flashing of pistols warned him that a struggle was taking place above.

The negro lad trembled violently and staggered along, verging a little to the right as he groaned forth:

"I fear that the captain has been assailed, but yet he had time enough to get to the secret cave. If I keep on to the cliff I will be captured by those ahead of me, and I must escape to aid him hereafter if he should be taken again."

Gaining fresh strength and courage when he thought of his beloved young captain, Donis darted along to the right, and made his way toward the secret cave, keeping some distance from the foot of the cliffs.

It was then for the first time that his two pursuers sent forth shouts and cries, after the manner of hunters engaged in chasing a fox.

The cries attracted some of those at the foot of the cliff, and fresh pursuers darted along in the chase after the negro boy.

The moon came out from behind a cloud at the same time, and all the pursuers could see the little fellow running along.

The wind was blowing, fresh from the sea, and all sounds from the cliff were borne to the ears of the anxious little fellow, so that he could hear the cries of alarm breaking from Maud Vernon, as well as the shouts of defiance sent up by Little Paul Jones and Hank Carson as they dashed through some of those who opposed them.

Then Donis raised his voice aloud, crying:

"Captain, brave captain, I am here, and I hasten to your aid."

The faithful little fellow had reached the path leading up to the cliff, when two men darted to intercept him, one of them crying:

"That's the little black fiend, and Lord Dudley will reward us for capturing him."

Donis fired at one of the men, and the fellow fell with a groan.

Without waiting to draw the other pistol, the little fellow flung the empty weapon at the second man, and it struck him on the nose with great force.

The fellow went down beside his companion, and the path up to the cliff was clear for the little negro.

Little Paul Jones and his companions were standing at bay on the cliff at the moment, and they were only a short distance beyond the path.

Before them appeared about a dozen of Lord Dudley's followers, while on after them pressed as many more of their enemies.

Captain Dudley had recovered from the blow he had received, and he was leading on the second party, while the old lord was keeping guard with several of his followers along the foot of the cliffs.

A joyous exclamation burst from the young captain as he saw Donis darting up toward them, and he cried aloud:

"Donis is safe, and we will cut our way through the rascals yet."

Old Lord Dudley was still pushing up the path, when he cried out to his son:

"Rush on the rascals at once, all of you above there, but do not fire at them."

At that moment Hank Carson was peering over a rock in search of a path downward, when a low voice below him addressed him and inquired:

"Who are you that they are assailing?"

Hank started on hearing the voice, but he readily answered in cautious tones:

"We are unlucky seamen who have just escaped from Dudley Castle, stranger."

"Are you smugglers?"

"Not exactly, but our captain and some of our men are well known to the smugglers along the coast here."

"What is your captain's name?"

"Paul Jones."

"Is he a son of the Paul Jones who was once famous along this coast?"

"He is, stranger."

"Then tell him and his friends to climb over this rock, and I will guide you to a place of safety."

Hank Carson darted out just as all the foes were making a rush at them, and Captain Jones was discharging his two pistols at those coming up the path.

"Follow me," said Hank, as he caught his young captain and

Maud by the arm and drew them in behind the sheltering rock. "This way, Donis."

Sending forth loud cries and threats, Captain Dudley and his followers rushed to the spot where the young friends had disappeared, Lord Dudley and his men gaining the top of the cliff about the same time.

Cries of surprise and rage burst from father and son when they looked behind the shelving rock, only to find that the fugitives had disappeared in the most mysterious manner.

Captain Dudley climbed up on the side of the rock with some of his followers until they could look down on the wave-washed strand below them, but they could not see a single trace of the four fugitives.

The side of the cliff below them was so steep that even a mountain goat could not find a foot thereon, save at one point that jutted out a few feet about the height of a man from the top of the cliff.

When Hank Carson retreated behind the sheltering rock and climbed up with his friends in all haste, they could see a young girl standing below them, and the young sailor inquired:

"How can we get down to you?"

His voice was not heard by the enemies who were rushing at them, while the young girl hastily answered:

"Drop down here at once and you will be safe."

Paul Jones cast an anxious glance at Maud, who answered by dropping lightly down beside the young girl, saying:

"Fear not for me."

The others hastened to follow her example, when the strange girl below said to them:

"If the friends of the smugglers are all here, hasten to follow me."

"We are all here," answered Paul, "and we will follow you with grateful hearts, young girl."

Their guide darted back from a small plateau, leading them down some rough steps until they were under the cliff on which their foes were standing.

The retreat in which they found themselves was a small cave sheltered on the outside by the steep rocks, and which appeared to have been recently used as a shelter for outlaws.

A small lamp was burning in the cave, in which appeared several benches, some mats and a rough table.

After glancing around the place, Paul Jones turned to thank the young girl again, and then inquired:

"May I know to whom we are indebted for this great kindness?"

The young girl smiled as she answered:

"When I tell you that I am a smuggler's daughter, you will understand why I am here. My father is the leader of the smugglers along this coast, and he is a prisoner in the town at present. I have often heard him tell of the great Paul Jones, as they were companions in early life, and I am glad to serve his son now."

CHAPTER XI.

TWO YOUNG HEROINES.

The smuggler's daughter then went on to tell her guests that a price was set on her head, that Lord Dudley was the man who had landed down her father, and that she would escape to another part of the coast, were it not that she was bound to remain the old smuggler.

Paul Jones seized the spirited girl's hand and pressed it warmly, as he rejoined:

"I mean to aid you in rescuing your father: and what may I call you?"

"Nancy Boggs is my name, and my father is old Jim Boggs, whom you may have heard about."

Paul Jones had heard his father speaking of the old smuggler, and he answered:

"My father did tell me about your father, Nancy, and you may be certain that I will return your great kindness before very long, as I expect my ship back here in a night or so."

"I heard of your ship this evening, sir. She attacked some forts and harbors down the coast, and it is said that the men-of-war now in the harbor above here will sail at once in pursuit of her."

That was cheering news for Paul and his friends, and he said as much.

While the young girl and Paul were thus conversing, Hank Carson and Donis stood aside, the former saying in low tones:

"Ain't she a pretty girl, Donis, and I swear I could make love to her forever."

"She is a nice girl, and she must be good also, Master Carson, but what queer clothes she wears."

Nancy Boggs was a young creature of sixteen, but she was arrayed in very rough garments.

The skirt of her rough dress was quite short, she wore a pair of rough boots and a coarse peajacket, while an old sailor's hat covered her light flowing ringlets.

Nancy had bright blue eyes, red glowing cheeks, and her comely face was ever smiling as she spoke.

The smuggler's daughter paid very little attention to any of those present except the young captain, until her eyes fell on the black boy, when she started and exclaimed:

"Who is the blackamoor?"

"That is my cabin boy, Donis, and a very faithful friend he is," answered Paul Jones. "Are we safe here for the present?"

The young girl did not answer save by springing back to the entrance of the cave, when she turned a crank that caused a large rock to move and close up the aperture.

She then turned and approached Paul Jones again, as she answered:

"I think we are safe now, unless traitors may be abroad, and I fear as much."

"Was your father betrayed then?"

"I suspected he was. Were you hiding in the cave below last night, captain?"

"I was not."

"Then who could it be I saw stealing in there last night?"

"It must have been me," answered Hank, as he pulled his forelock and made an awkward bow to the young girl. "I went in there last night to rest about this hour, but I didn't see anyone watching me on the cliff."

Nancy smiled as she replied:

"I wasn't watching you from the cliff, but I saw a light from the cove outside, and I feared that our enemies may have discovered our hiding place."

A general conversation was then held, when it was decided that they should all remain in the cave that night and until the following evening.

Nancy placed bread, cheese, and wine before her guests, as she remarked:

"Thank goodness, we can stand a siege here, and no duty has been paid on the wine, either."

Paul and Donis were very hungry, as they had not been fed well in the dungeon, and they both set to with evident relish.

Hank Carson ate and drank a little, saying:

"I had a good supper in the other cave, but I will keep your company, captain."

Maud Vernon drank of a little of the wine, as she said to Paul Jones:

"I drink to your safe departure from this coast, sir, and

then for a gallant fight with an English ship the size of your own."

"Here's that I may soon encounter Captain Dudley on the high seas in his own frigate, young lady, and then I hope to settle with him forever."

While the guests were eating, Nancy Boggs moved away toward the land entrance of the cave, as she remarked:

"I must be on the watch, as I feel that a traitor is abroad to-night."

Complimentary remarks were passed on the smuggler's daughter when she was out of hearing, Maud Vernon saying:

"There is a heroine, and I feel that she will succeed in rescuing her father."

"She is a brave girl," answered Paul, "and I will never forget her."

The hungry folks had scarcely finished a hearty meal when the young girl returned, followed by a repulsive looking old woman, whom she introduced to the others, saying:

"Friends, this is my stepmother, and she reports to me that your enemies are still on the watch for you outside."

The old hag nodded as she remarked:

"Yes, the hawks are out to-night, and I fear that they will pounce on you all before long."

"Why do you fear so, mother?" inquired Nancy, as she cast a warning glance at the others, and then fixed her bright blue eyes on the old woman.

"Because, my dear, your father was betrayed, and why shouldn't the same traitor betray you all here?"

"Who was that traitor, mother?"

"If I knew him, girl, he would be dead ere now, if I had to seek him in Dudley Castle."

Nancy cast another warning glance at her new friends, and then moved around behind her stepmother to grasp her by the arms, as she cried:

"You are the traitor, old hag, and you are seeking to betray us now. Seize her, friends, and bind her with that cord. Then look to your arms, as our enemies will soon be upon us."

Hank Carson was the first to spring forward to assist the young girl in securing the old woman.

The old creature fought like a fiend, screaming and yelling at the same time, but the young sailor soon slipped a rope around her arms and rendered her powerless, while Nancy kept crying:

"I knew that you hated my father and me, you wicked old wretch, and I am now certain that it was you who betrayed him. Gag her, friends, and then prepare to defend yourselves."

The old woman was secured and silenced, and Nancy then sprang to the outward entrance, when she paused at a small passage and bent her ear to listen.

Paul and the others followed her, with their weapons ready for use, and Maud saying:

"Perhaps you may be mistaken, Nancy."

"I am never mistaken in my opinion of a traitor," promptly answered the girl, as she still bent her ear to listen intently.

She then gave a few whispered instructions, which Hank and the black boy hastened to follow.

After listening for some time, Nancy moved into the dark passage as she said to Maud:

"You come with me and raise your voice to stay them when I tell you. I know that the Dudleys will not fire on you, and we can keep them at bay until the others prepare for our retreat."

Captain Paul Jones was about to protest against the arrangement, but Maud followed the young girl into the dark passage, saying:

"We must obey her, sir, as I feel that she is a true friend, indeed."

Paul followed into the dark passage also, and he soon heard a voice ahead of him crying:

"Who comes here?"

It was Maud who asked the question, and another voice ahead answered:

"A friend, young lady. Maud, Miss Vernon, you cannot escape, as your hiding place was betrayed to us; but we offer quarter to the pirate rascals if they will surrender."

The speaker was Captain Dudley, and he was advancing through the narrow passage to meet the young girls, when Maud raised her voice again, crying:

"Stop where you are, sir, or we will fire on you. My friends will not surrender, and I am determined not to fall into your father's power again."

While thus speaking, the two girls in front retreated until they encountered Paul Jones, who said to them:

"If you can slip past me I will meet the rascals with my sword."

"No, no," returned the smuggler's daughter. "Miss Vernon will keep him back until the rope is ready for our escape, and then we will all down on the strand together. Let us remain in front here, as they will not dare fire at the young lady."

A shrill whistle was heard from the inner cave at the moment, while out rang Captain Dudley's voice, crying:

"Miss Vernon, we will not show the rascals any quarter if they offer resistance."

"They do not ask for quarter," answered Maud, "and I will die before I fall into your hands again."

"Retreat! retreat!" whispered the smuggler's daughter, "and out on the rocks with you, as the rope is ready now."

The girl pushed Maud back as she spoke, and they were all in the open cave again, when she addressed Paul Jones, saying:

"Out with you, and I will close the passage."

"But you cannot escape yourself then," suggested the young sailor.

"Yes, I can, as the rock will close after I get out."

Hank and Donis advanced toward the others, the former saying:

"The rope is ready on the ledge outside, but it is a mighty dangerous job for the young ladies to venture down on it."

"Not for me," answered Nancy. "Down with you first, lad, and try its strength. The blackamoor will follow, and I will be the last. Hasten to obey me, or your enemies will rush in on you."

CHAPTER XII.

THE CLIPPER ON THE COAST.

Hank hesitated to follow the order, when his young captain said to him.

"Obey her, Hank, and you follow after, Donis. I will take care of the young lady."

"You must take care of yourself first," said Maud Vernon. "Out with you and leave Nancy and I to keep the others back."

They had reached the end of the cave and Nancy had blown out the lamp.

Pushing Paul and Maud out before her, the young girl seized the crank and the rock moved forward to hide the entrance.

When it was within two feet of closing the smuggler's daughter sprang suddenly out, and the large rock closed with a snap.

Then into the dark cavern inside rushed Captain Dudley and

a strong party of his followers, all of whom were armed with swords and pistols.

Nancy led the way up to the plateau, when they found that Hank and Donis had already descended to the strand on the long rope, one end of which was secured to a bolt fixed in the rock above them.

"Down with you," said Nancy to Paul Jones.

The young sailor turned to Maud as he inquired in imploring tones:

"Will you not trust yourself in my arms, young lady?"

"No, no," protested Nancy. "It twill be safer for us to go alone, and I will show that young lady how to use the rope."

"Fear not for me," answered Maud, "as I can slip down in safety."

Being thus refused, Paul Jones seized the rope and hastened to descend.

He had scarcely reached the strand below when two pistol shots were fired above, and then Nancy's voice was heard crying:

"The hawks have seized us, but I have cut the rope. Away with you, and save yourselves."

"Fire at the pirates!" cried a voice above, "and then down to the strand to intercept them!"

Captain Dudley had scarcely given the order when a volley rang out from the plateau, and the bullets struck the strand near the three young sailors.

Donis drew his captain under a shelving rock, and Hank Carson followed them as he remarked:

"I think we had better get, captain, as we can't help the young ladies just now."

The young fellows did glide along, keeping close to the cliffs at the side of the strand, until they reached a huge mass of rocks jutting out into the sea.

The moon was obscured by the clouds again, and those on the cliff could not perceive the fugitives as they slipped down into the water to swim around to the secret passage leading to the cove.

They were all convinced that the old woman had betrayed them, but they were consoled by the words uttered by Nancy, when she declared that the hag did not know about the other cave.

Paul Jones also remembered his father telling him that the secret of that cove and cave was only known to the best trusted of the smugglers along the coast, and that it was never confided to anyone not directly engaged in the illegal trade.

They were all good swimmers, and they managed to reach the secret cove, from whence it was an easy matter to get into the cave above.

The young fellows had scarcely found themselves in the safe shelter when they heard the loud booming of guns in the direction of the harbor, and Paul Jones cried:

"I'll wager my life but that is the Scorpion on the coast again. Let us up and see."

The three friends ran out of the cave and clambered up the high rocks on one side of the cove, from whence they could look out on the sea.

The cannon shots were still firing, and the moon was appearing again.

A joyful exclamation burst from Paul Jones as he beheld the Clipper blazing away at the fort at the mouth of the harbor, and he said:

"We'll have a boat here soon, and our good ship will stand off to receive us."

"I see two large vessels sailing down out of the harbor," remarked Hank Carson, "and they must be the frigates coming out to attack the Clipper."

"The wind is blowing this way, Hank, and the Scorpion can

laugh at the frigates, if we were but once on board. Then to humbug the rascals, by slipping out to sea, and to return and land in force, for the rescue of the girls and the old smuggler."

"There's a boat putting out from the clipper now, sir, and the ship is veering this way. The fort is silenced, and I bet it's in ruins."

"Yes," responded Paul Jones, with great vehemence, "and there will be more ruins along the coast before long, as I will not rest until Dudley Castle is leveled to the ground."

The boat from the clipper was pushing along the coast with great speed, and the clipper was under full sail, moving along out in the deep water.

The two English frigates were gliding out of the harbor in pursuit, firing their bow guns at the enemy.

The shots fell short, however, and the clipper was moving away before the wind at a spanking gait.

Lord Dudley and his son, with more than thirty of their followers, stood on the high cliffs above the small plateau, and all eyes were fixed on the swift boat and on the ships outside.

Maud Vernon and Nancy Boggs stood near the Dudleys, looking out also, and the young girls were guarded and bound like common felons.

The boat from the clipper kept out of reach of the pistol and musket shots of those on shore, and it soon disappeared around the huge rocks jutting out into the sea.

In less than five minutes after the boat appeared again, steering straight for the clipper, and Captain Dudley stamped his foot in a rage, as he cried:

"The young pirate captain and the others are escaping to the clipper, and the pirate ship can outsail the frigates. Would to heaven that I had the Marmion here now, and I would sink the rascal."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STINGS OF THE SCORPION.

The American built clipper showed a clean pair of heels to the English frigates that night, leaving the fort at the mouth of the harbor in ruins.

Lord Dudley and his son retreated to the castle with the two girls as prisoners.

Nancy Boggs was a light-hearted creature, yet she felt somewhat downcast when she was placed in a strong room of the castle with Maud, and more especially when they were informed that the old traitress, Mother Boggs, was to be their jailer.

The old hag hated Nancy ever since the old smuggler had the bad fortune to make the treacherous creature his wife.

The old smuggler took his daughter's part when she grew up to be a bright and winsome girl, and the old hag became embittered against her husband.

Mother Boggs, as she was called, waited, however, until she found a good chance for revenge, and she then informed Lord Dudley that her husband and several of his companions would land a valuable cargo of French goods on the coast on a certain night.

Nancy Boggs was in her father's full confidence, and the young girl was with the smugglers on the night mentioned.

The revenue men and Lord Dudley's followers made a raid on the smugglers, but Nancy was on the lookout, and she warned her father in time to get the ship and the cargo away.

A desperate fight ensued, during which two of the revenue officers were killed, four were severely wounded, and old Joe Boggs was taken prisoner.

Nancy was implicated in the desperate affair, as she fought

like a heroine in attempting to rescue her father, and a large reward was offered for her capture.

The smugglers under old Jim Boggs were dispersed for the time, but they held themselves in readiness for any daring attempt in favor of their leader, or for revenge on Lord Dudley.

As old Boggs never trusted his second wife much, the old hag was not informed about the secret cove and cave, where Captain Paul Jones had found a resting place with his young friends, while the old hag had discovered the other hiding place by chance.

On the following afternoon Lord Dudley and his friends were startled on hearing from the French privateer again.

One of the frigates returned to Fairport after giving up the hopeless chase, but the other kept on in pursuit during the night, sailing down the coast after the enemy.

The chasing frigate was larger than the Scorpion, carrying more guns and men as well.

A fishing-smack returned to the harbor at noon with two English sailors belonging to the frigate on board, and they reported that the French privateer had given battle early in the morning.

A sharp sea-fight then ensued, which ended in the Scorpion closing on the English frigate, when the French privateer swept all before them on the deck of the enemy.

The sailors stated that the little French captain led the boarders, and that he appeared to be a perfect fiend in battle.

During the excitement of the struggle on board the English frigate, and when the French had gained the day, the two sailors slipped over into the sea and swam to the fishing-smack, which was lying in shoal water near the coast.

The fishermen on board the smack verified the statement of the sailors, one of them saying:

"We could not believe our eyes when we saw the two ships bearing away to the east soon after, and French flags flying from both of 'em."

Lord Dudley and his son were still raving over the important intelligence when a special messenger arrived at the castle bearing a letter from Captain Johnson, an old English veteran who served in the Russian navy at the time when old Paul Jones was in that service.

Captain Johnson was one of those English officers engaged in ugly plots to destroy the old hero's reputation in Russia, and he was bitter against him on every occasion until his death was reported.

The English officer had retired from active service, and he was residing on a fine estate thirty miles down the coast.

The letter received by Lord Dudley ran as follows:

"Dear Old Friend.—Something extraordinary has happened here, and the spirit of that pirate and traitor we tried to crush in Russia is abroad again.

"Early this morning we heard firing off the coast, when we imagined that one of our frigates was sinking that accursed privateer which has been scouring our coast recently, and we sent some of our boats out to bear us back joyful intelligence.

"Before the boats could return a strange vessel sailed into our little harbor and bombarded the fort, destroying it in less than no time.

"Fully two hundred privateers then landed to sack the town, and fifty of them marched out to attack my place, led on by a young wretch who claims to be the son of that Paul Jones whom we tried to crush in Russia.

"I defended my house as well as I could, but I was compelled to fly for my life in order to escape capture by the pirates.

"My fine house was burned to the ground, my good horses and the other cattle were either killed or driven off, and the pirates left my grounds in a terrible state.

"The pirate ship sailed away again after destroying all the public buildings in the town and taking an immense amount of plunder with them.

"Your brave son must hasten to London, and sail out in his frigate to destroy the pirate ship commanded by young Paul Jones, and I will accompany him.

"Expect me at your castle a few hours after receiving this, and then for revenge and retaliation on the son of our old enemy.

Yours for vengeance,

"Joseph Johnson."

Lord Dudley fumed again after reading the letter of his old friend, and his son cried:

"I will send messengers to London at once to hasten the repairs on the Marmion, as she must be ready for sea in a few days. Then I will sail out to pursue the rascal, and we will hang him from the walls of the castle."

Before night closed in the large frigate sailed out of the harbor to cruise down the coast, and messengers were dispatched to other ports for more assistance against the dreadful scourge.

About nine o'clock a strange vessel appeared off the harbor to cast anchor within half a mile of the ruined fort.

The alarm bell rang out in the town when it was discovered that the strange vessel was the Scorpion, and preparations were made to defend the place against the landing of the privateers in force.

The Scorpion commenced work by sending some shots and shells at the Custom House, which was about a mile in from the port, and the panic-stricken inhabitants of the town hastened to leave their homes and retreat to the hills beyond.

After firing for some time, the guns of the Clipper ceased their work of destruction, and darkness reigned over the harbor and the high cliffs along the coast.

Under the shelter of the darkness the Scorpion moved along the coast, to cast anchor again about half a mile outside the secret cove.

Lord Dudley and his son had called for reinforcements in the castle, and a party of fifty soldiers were sent from the town.

The old lord could muster about an equal number of his own followers, and with the hundred armed men under him he felt certain of being able to hold the place against any force that the privateer could bring against him.

The coast-guards and soldiers were placed along the cliffs to keep watch on the movements of the privateer, and to warn their friends in the town and in the castle if their bold enemy should attempt a landing.

About midnight a strong party of privateers dashed along the cliffs to overpower, put to flight, or to capture the watchers stationed there, and only two men escaped to the town to report that the enemy held the cliffs.

At that juncture the Scorpion put back to the harbor again, and renewed her fire on the town.

A large boat full of privateers put out from the clipper at the same time, as if to attack a point near the custom-house, and near which the jail was located.

The guns of the clipper were directed at the jail and the buildings around it, until all the streets in the neighborhood were cleared of English soldiers.

The jail itself was soon set on fire, and then the wildest excitement prevailed throughout the building.

The boat from the privateer soon effected a landing, and the men therein made a rush for the jail, led on by the old boat-swain.

Two blue rockets were sent up from the boat, when the guns on the clipper ceased firing.

The men from the privateer carried a large spar, which they used as a battering ram on the door of the jail, which was soon forced open.

The privateers then rushed into the burning building, and hastened to release all the prisoners, overpowering the jailers and guards at the same time.

Old Joe Boggs, the smuggler chief, was staring out of the small window in his cell, when the iron door was flung open and a rough voice outside cried out:

"Is Joe Boggs in here?"

"Bless my eyes," answered the old smuggler, "if I ain't heard that voice long years ago, and it sounds as if it was coming from the grave."

Old Paul Jones placed his mouth to the old smuggler's ear and responded:

"Be still as death about it, and I know I can confide in you, Joe, but I am your old messmate, Paul Jones, who was supposed to be dead so long. You are safe now from the hawks, and here goes to rescue your good daughter."

The privateers reached their boat without losing a man, taking the old smuggler with them.

When the boat put out from shore, the guns of the clipper played on the barracks and the other public buildings in the town, thus attracting all the force in the neighborhood except those engaged in defending the castle, to that point.

Lord Dudley and his son were watching from one of the turrets of the castle, and the old man was remarking:

"Charles, I feel that the rascals will pay us a visit before morning, but they seem to be busy in the harbor now."

None of the watchers assailed on the cliffs had reached the castle to report, and the Dudley's were not aware that the privateers held possession in that direction.

Before the young man could reply, cries of alarm were heard in the lower part of the castle, followed by shouts and cries, while one voice rang out, saying:

"The French are on us, and they have entered the castle through some private passage."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIGHT IN THE CASTLE.

Lord Dudley and his son were so intent in defending the castle and in watching the operations of the privateers in the town that they forgot all about the secret passage leading in from the graveyard.

Having cleared the cliffs and the country below it, Little Paul Jones led over a hundred men from the secret cave where they had landed in four boats, and he marched them along deserted paths toward the castle.

Among the privateers thus engaged were Hank Carson and Donis, the former being the most eager of all to aid in rescuing the smuggler's daughter.

Before leaving the cave on the previous night, Little Paul Jones had sent three cunning spies to the town, and the shrewd fellows awaited him at the rendezvous when the clipper put back to attack the jail.

From these men Little Paul learned that both girls were held as prisoners in the castle, and that was his main object in sending forth the stings of the Scorpion against the town that night.

Lady Dudley heard the commotion in the castle when the privateers from the town arrived there, and she then learned

for the first time that an attack by the French privateers was expected.

The guns in the harbor kept Lady Dudley awake on that eventful night, and she was reclining on a lounge long after midnight.

Lady Dudley was thinking over her past life, and of the little boy she had lost, when a slight noise behind the bed curtain attracted her attention.

The old lady raised her head from the lounge, when a soft voice fell on her ears, inquiring:

"Are you awake, Lady Dudley?"

"Who asks for me?" demanded the brave old lady, as she sat upon the lounge and glared at the curtain.

That curtain was drawn aside on the instant, and out before the old lady stepped Captain Paul Jones in the full uniform of a French officer.

The brave old lady started a little, and then bent her reproachful eyes on the young man as she demanded:

"How dare you intrude on me in this way, sir?"

The young man bowed in the most respectful manner as he answered:

"I humbly beg your pardon for my intrusion, but I assure you that I am here only to save two brave young girls, to whom I am indebted for my life."

"To whom do you allude, sir?"

Little Paul Jones then gave a hurried description of his adventures on the previous night after leaving the castle, and he concluded by saying:

"The young ladies are now confined in the strong room at the top of the castle, and I will rescue them if possible without much bloodshed. I have sworn to lay this castle in ashes, but I will forego my oath in that respect out of gratitude to you, noble lady."

While Paul Jones was speaking Hank Carson and Donis appeared from behind the bed-curtains, and the little negro boy hastened to kneel before the good old lady and exclaim:

"Dear, good lady angel, the black boy will die to serve you forever, but he must obey his young captain and rescue the young ladies."

Hank Carson also bent his knee before Lady Dudley as he said to her:

"Noble lady, I am only a poor sailor boy, but I heard about your kindness to our brave captain and Donis here, and shiver my timbers if Hank Carson wouldn't cut off his right hand to serve you!"

Lady Dudley started on looking at the rough sailor boy, and she stared at him in a dazed manner as she exclaimed:

"Those eyes, those eyes! How they remind me of one who is lost to me forever. What is your name, lad, and where do you belong?"

Hank pulled his forelock and then rubbed the back of his neck as he replied:

"I belongs in New York city, lady, and I am only a rough sailor lad who doesn't know no one belonging to him, good or bad."

The door of the bedroom was pushed open at this moment, and old Mother Boggs appeared at the threshold.

The treacherous old creature stared at the strangers for a moment, and then turned to fly along the hall as she yelled aloud:

"The Frenchmen are on us! The pirates are in the castle to murder us all!"

Little Paul Jones darted to the door after the old hag, crying:

"We must take possession of the castle now, lady, and rescue the maidens. Hank, give the signal for the others, and see that you protect this noble lady."

Hank blew a whistle, and then out from behind the curtains poured the privateers.

"Pass out into the hall," cried Hank, "and see that none of you touch this noble lady, who must be protected as if she were an angel from Heaven."

The rough sailors doffed their hats to the lady as they filed out into the hallway, where their young captain awaited them, to give them orders for subduing the armed men in the castle.

The defenders of the castle were assembled in the courtyard and the lower part of the building, and many were on the ramparts also, when the old hag rushed down to announce that the privateers were on them.

The alarm bell of the castle rang out in loud tones, two cannon shots were fired from the ramparts, and shrill cries resounded on every side of the great building.

Little Paul Jones hastened to secure the second floor of the castle, disarming and making prisoners of all those who attempted to oppose him.

Lord Dudley and his son reached the lower part of the castle, only to find their followers in some disorder, and to learn that the privateers held all the stairways except the private passage leading to the turret.

Having secured the upper part of the building, the little captain ordered his men to hold the stairway, and he hastened up to release the prisoners.

Joyful cries burst from Maud and Nancy when the young officer appeared before them crying:

"If you place yourselves under my guidance, young ladies, I will promise you protection from those who are treating you so cruelly."

"What of my father?" inquired Nancy Boggs.

Paul Jones turned to stare out of the window before replying, when he could perceive four rockets going up from the clipper in quick succession, and he answered:

"I am delighted to inform you that your father is safe on board my ship now. Let us down at once, as we have some fighting before us before we can retreat."

When Paul Jones reached the second floor with the girls, Lord Dudley and his people were striving to force their way up the main stairs.

The privateers had formed barricades at the head of each stairway with bedding and bureaus, and they were using their pistols with deadly effect on those who attempted to ascend.

Captain Dudley saw that he could not force a way up the main stairway without terrible loss, and he ordered his men back before he turned to his father, saying:

"Make a show of attacking them here, sir, while I lead a force up the private passage to burst out on them on the second floor."

"Very well, Charles, and do not spare the rascals. I will attack them here again when I hear that you are engaged with them above."

Captain Paul Jones had just led the two girls into the old lady's apartment, when Captain Dudley and about fifty of his fighting men gained a footing on the broad landing near the private passage leading to the tower.

The privateers turned to meet their foes, and the little captain was soon in the midst of his men, crying:

"Guard the stairways, and we will deal with those fellows here."

The privateers were forcing their enemies back into the turret passage, when a bright light burst out from one of the chambers on the broad landing, and one of the privateers cried out:

"Fire! This room here is all ablaze, brave captain."

While the man was thus crying out a huge volume of smoke

and flames burst out of the bedroom into the hallway, and through the windows in front as well.

CHAPTER XV.

FIGHTING ON THE RETREAT.

When the alarm cries of fire rang out, Paul Jones ordered his men to retreat through the old lady's chamber, as he said to the officer next in command:

"Form in the graveyard, and hold the place until we are all safe out of here. Send two parties of ten or twelve out to keep the paths clear leading to the cliffs."

Lady Dudley and the two girls were seated together on a large lounge when the retreating privateers filed into the secret passage behind the curtain.

Captain Paul Jones was the last to leave the smoking landing outside, and about ten of his men, with Hank Carson and Donis, remained with him.

The fire was spreading at a terrible rate when the little hero appeared before Lady Dudley again, having closed the door of the bedroom to keep out the dense smoke, as he said to her:

"Good lady, I regret to tell you that the castle is on fire. It is impossible for you to get down through the smoke, and I beg that you will allow us to bear you out through the secret passage. In the meantime the people of the castle may quench the fire before it reaches the other floors."

Lady Dudley nodded in approval, and then turned to Hank Carson, saying:

"Let this good lad assist in bearing me out."

"That I will, good lady," answered Hank, as he lifted the invalid in his strong arms, "and I won't want any help, either."

The flames were still spreading at a fearful rate as the stalwart lad bore the helpless invalid through the dark passage, the young girls moving along in front, and Nancy Boggs bearing a lamp.

Lord Dudley and his son soon became aware that their splendid castle was on fire, and the former stamped with rage as he cried:

"The infernal pirates have done this work, and Lady Dudley will be burned to death."

Another rush was then made for the broad stairway, when it was found that the privateers had retreated.

Calling on his followers to put out the fire and to save Lady Dudley, the old lord had the main gate thrown open, and he placed himself at the head of about sixty men as he cried:

"The pirates are retreating by the graveyard! Let us forward and slay them there. We will soon have assistance from the town, and not one of the rascals will escape to the coast alive!"

Little Paul Jones and his followers had reached the graveyard with Lady Dudley and the girls, when one of the privateers cried out:

"Brave captain, our enemies are marching this way from the castle in force."

Lady Dudley was reclining near the old vault, and she was pressing Hank Carson's hand as she said to him:

"Good lad, if you have a chance, without risking your life, come to see me again."

"You can bet I will, good lady," answered Hank.

"Away with you all now!" cried Captain Jones. "Lady Dudley, your friends will soon be here, and I swear to you that we did not set the castle on fire by design."

"I believe you, young sir. Should you ever come to Eng-

land when the war is over, call on me with this young sailor if I am alive."

"I will, I will, good lady. On to the coast, lads, and protect the young girls at all risk."

The young girls did hasten away with the privateers, and Paul Jones and Hank were the last to retreat.

The sailor lad was not more than steps away from the old lady when a sharp voice in the rear cried out:

"There are the rascals. Send one volley at them, and then charge on the double quick."

Several musket shots were fired an instant after, and Hank Carson staggered back, as he cried out:

"I am done for, captain. Away with you and save yourself."

The armed men from the castle, led on by old Lord Dudley and his son, pressed into the graveyard a moment after, the old lord crying again:

"The pirates are retreating into the grove. Press on after them and give no quarter."

At that moment Lady Dudley arose from the ground and staggered toward the fallen sailor boy, as she exclaimed:

"Spare this poor lad, Lord Dudley, as my heart warms to him. Oh, mercy, mercy! I fear that he is dead!"

Lord Dudley and those under him drew up on seeing the ghostly figure in the graveyard, but the old nobleman soon recognized his wife's voice, and he cried:

"Forward as fast as you can. The pirates must have brought the lady here through a secret passage."

The old wretch was hoping that his wife would perish in the flames, as he would then be complete master of the fine estate, which was her own birthright.

The flames were bursting out of many of the windows of the castle at the time, and the bright glare shed light over the dismal graveyard.

The pursuers pressed on after the privateers until they reached the dense grove beyond the graveyard, when a voice in front of them was heard, crying:

"At them, my lads, with pistol and cutlass, as we must rescue Hank Carson, dead or alive!"

The privateers had formed in the dense grove, and they greeted their approaching enemies with a rattling volley from their pistols.

The men from the castle were thrown in confusion by the sharp volley, and several of those who had not fallen turned to fly before the privateers dashed back at them with their cutlasses.

"Back to the graveyard!" yelled Little Paul Jones, "and seize Lord Dudley if possible."

The old lord had been struck in the head by a pistol ball, and he fell senseless among some bushes.

The privateers rushed back to the graveyard in quest of Hank Carson, scattering their enemies on all sides in their headlong charge.

Paul Jones led the way into the graveyard until he reached the spot where the young sailor had fallen, but he could not see anything of the wounded lad or of the old lady.

CHAPTER XVI.

BY THE LIGHT OF THE BLAZING CASTLE.

The sounds of the alarm bells and the guns from the castle reached the troops in the town, and the officer in command of the station sent over two hundred men out to Lord Dudley's assistance.

The French privateer moved away from the harbor again, and bore down along the coast, to stand off and on near the secret cove.

A large boat put out from the clipper once more with all the men that could be spared, and old Paul Jones and his smuggler friend were seated at the stern conversing in whispers.

"What is that light over there, Joe?" asked old Paul Jones.

The old smuggler shaded his eyes with his hands and gazed in the direction of the burning castle before he answered.

"Bless my eyes, if I don't think Dudley Castle is all ablaze, and there's a fight going on over near it."

"Pull hearty there, lads, and let us get on shore quick," cried old Paul Jones to the sailors at the oars. "Our captain is in a big fight, and we must strike with him."

The sailors gave a rousing cheer in response, and the large boat soon pushed into the secret cove.

In less than five minutes afterward old Paul Jones was leading his party toward the burning castle, and Joe Boggs was still by his side.

Little Paul Jones was retreating from the grove near the graveyard at the same time.

Captain Dudley had been compelled to retreat with his followers until they fell back on the troops advancing from the town, who numbered over a hundred men on foot.

Some seventy mounted troopers were riding along the main road to act with the foot soldiers, and the movements of all could be perceived by the bright glare in the huge burning building.

Old Lord Dudley soon recovered from the effects of the pistol-ball which had struck him on the head, as the bullet had only stunned him.

The old tyrant was dazed at first on regaining his feet, but the spectacle of the fine old castle burning before his eyes aroused all his rage and his energies as well, and he rushed to the edge of the grove to meet the advancing troops, as he yelled aloud:

"This way in pursuit, and we will cut off the pirates before they can reach their boats. I offer ten pounds for every dog of them slain to-night, and a thousand gold pieces to the soldier who will take their young captain dead or alive."

Maud had resumed her own proper costume during the day, and the two female forms could be perceived among the rough sailors as they all retreated down toward the main road.

The troopers were not more than fifty yards away when the privateers dashed across the road, making for the high cliffs, which were still held by a small party of their own men.

The foot soldiers in pursuit were about two hundred yards behind the privateers at the same time, but those in the retreat were making the best speed.

The active sailors sent forth shouts of defiance as they darted across the road and into the rough ground leading to the cliffs.

The horsemen hastened to dismount in pursuit, and the full force under Lord Dudley's control closed together to attack the privateers as they ascended the cliffs.

At that juncture, old Paul Jones and the fresh men under him appeared on the scene.

The old smuggler was delighted on seeing his daughter free, and he hastened to embrace Nancy as he cried aloud:

"On with you to where you know now, my pet, and take the young lady with you, while I give a hand in peppering the hawks who would have strung me up on the gallows tree."

The fresh men under old Paul Jones were armed with muskets, and they sheltered themselves behind the rocks on the cliffs as they sent a rattling volley down at the pursuing soldiers.

The privateers scattered along the cliff were recalled, signals were made to the clipper outside, and the men bearing pistols were ordered to retreat to the secret cave.

Little Paul Jones then placed himself in command of those bearing muskets, and they continued to pour deadly volleys down on the soldiers.

The troops below quailed before the galling fire, but some of the most active among them climbed up the steep banks and the path before mentioned.

Captain Dudley led about fifty of the soldiers up the path, and the foremost ranks had gained the cliffs, when Little Paul Jones led his reserve out against him, as he cried:

"Down with the hawks, and then we will retreat in safety, my lads."

The impetuous privateers poured one volley into the soldiers and then closed with them, the young captain still crying:

"Hurl them back, my brave lads. Captain Dudley, I hope to meet you soon on the deck of the Marmion."

While thus speaking, Little Paul Jones hurled his foe back with a blow of his sword, and the baffled young Englishman fell down the side of the cliff.

The two old veterans were not idle in the meantime, as they were the foremost in repelling those who had gained a footing on the cliff.

Having secured a safe retreat, the privateers retreated to the cove, the last of them to enter the passage sending up a signal to the clipper.

The guns of the clipper then opened on the cliffs, shells were sent booming through the air, and the privateers in the cove below hastened to put out to sea.

Little Paul Jones was still the last to retreat into the cave, where Maud and Nancy awaited him.

After congratulating the young lady on her escape from the castle, Little Paul Jones said to her:

"If you will come with me on board the clipper with Nancy here, I pledge you my honor that I will land you in safety on any point of England or Ireland that you may desire, and as soon as possible."

Nancy Boggs was looking around among the privateers, and she eagerly inquired:

"Where is the young lad who was with you last night here in the cave?"

A sigh escaped from Little Paul Jones as he answered. "Poor Hank Carson was shot while retreating to the graveyard, and he disappeared with Lady Dudley afterward when we hastened back to rescue him. If Hank is alive and a prisoner, I swear to rescue him very soon."

One of the privateers rushed into the cave crying: "Captain, captain, the large frigate that chased us last night is bearing up the coast now!"

"Then we must away at once, ladies," cried Little Paul Jones. "Will you trust in me?"

"We will, we will!" responded Maud.

The last boat put off from the cove with the young girls and their new protector.

The English frigate was then bearing up along the coast within two miles of the Clipper.

The Scorpion continued to send forth shots and shells at the cliffs until all the boats reached her sides, when Little Paul Jones sprang on the deck and gave orders to put out to sea.

Captain Paul Jones then ran into the cabin, crying:

"Donis, Donis! Did anyone see anything of the little black boy?"

"I have not seen him since we left the graveyard," answer-

ed Maud Vernon, "and I hope he has not been killed or taken prisoner."

"He is missing, at all events," answered the young captain, with a sigh, "but I will hope that he is with Hank Carson and Lady Dudley, as none of the men noticed him since we retreated from the graveyard."

The young captain was soon called on deck by a fresh danger threatening the clipper.

The fast ship was making out between two headlands, and the large English frigate was in close pursuit, while not near enough to bring her guns to bear on the bold privateer.

A strange sail had been sighted outside, and it soon appeared that the stranger was another large frigate, and that it would be impossible for the clipper to pass out without receiving more than one broadside from her powerful guns.

The headlands were not more than two miles apart, and the frigate outside, though not as fast a sailer as the Scorpion, was bound to intercept the latter in her present course.

One of the headlands to the right was on a small island, and a narrow passage, often used by smugglers and vessels of light draft, steered through an opening which was then within a mile of the privateer.

Little Paul Jones had learned all the bearings of the coast, and after surveying his foes he turned to the old boatswain and inquired:

"Can we make that passage?"

The young man pointed toward the dangerous passage as he asked the question, and his father promptly answered:

"I have made it in as large a ship in other days, sir, but my hand was steadier then, and my eye was brighter. Yet we will venture it to-night, if you say so, as it is our only salvation now, and old Joe Boggs will help me through."

"That I will, old mate," responded the smuggler, "but I can tell you it is a dangerous shift."

"We will try it," cried Captain Paul Jones, "as we cannot fight the two frigates."

The young captain gave an order to his men, and the two old sailors sprang to the helm.

The clipper was steered straight for the narrow passage, and the two frigates closed on her before she could enter the opening.

The frigates soon opened fire on their bold enemy, but the privateer did not answer the salute.

Lord Dudley and his son, with several of their followers around them, were standing on the high cliffs, and the old man was saying:

"They will sink the pirate, and I only hope that the young captain and the old smuggler will be rescued to suffer death on the gallows."

"And I hope, father, that the young rascal will escape, so that I may have the honor of crushing him hereafter. I trust the frigates will not attempt to follow him."

The clipper had then entered the dangerous passage, the frigate outside was steering after her, still firing her bow guns.

The other frigate held off in the dangerous passage, making signals to her friend at the same time, as if warning her not to attempt the dangerous path.

The privateer soon disappeared between the tall cliffs at each side of the passage, and the foremost frigate put in after her.

"She is doomed!" cried Captain Dudley, who was well aware of the perils to be encountered by both the vessels entering the passage.

The words were scarcely uttered when the frigate struck on a hidden rock and went over on one side, as if sorely wounded by the shock.

"She is doomed," cried Captain Dudley, "and that pirate rascal is safe through the passage."

The English frigate was doomed, and she was a total wreck most of her crew were saved by the boats from the other frigate.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE OLD HAG'S SECRET.

It wanted but an hour of daylight that morning when Lord Dudley and his son turned toward the smoking castle from the cliffs.

The privateer was then safe out to sea, having left fearful stings behind her, and the English frigate was away after her in hopeless pursuit.

Lord Dudley and his son had scarcely gained the high road when they met their expected guest, who had been detained in the town during the excitement of the night.

Captain Johnson was a bluff old sailor, and he was in a fearful rage over the doings of the daring privateer.

Weary as he was, he proposed to young Captain Dudley that they should start out for London at once, and hasten to sea in the Marmion to pursue and crush the little hero who was avenging his father in such a terrible manner.

"I understand," said Captain Johnson, "that the Marmion can outsail any frigate in the service, and that she is more than a match for that infernal scourge in armament and men."

"From what I can perceive," responded Captain Dudley, "the two ships are about equally matched in speed and strength, and I will hasten to London with you as soon as possible."

The three friends were approaching the smoking castle, and they were nearing the graveyard, when old Mother Boggs appeared suddenly before them, as she said to Lord Dudley:

"I want a few words with you, my lord, concerning an important affair."

The old lord stepped aside on the path, and Captain Johnson and his son walked on.

When the latter were out of hearing, Lord Dudley cast a careful glance around before he addressed the old woman in low tones, and inquired:

"What is it now, Moll?"

The old woman grinned up at the old nobleman in a fiendish manner, as she answered:

"I want to speak to you about your good lady and someone else."

"What about my lady, and where is she?"

"She is not far from here, and she is very lively for one who has been an invalid so long. And she should be, my lord, as she has something to live for now."

The old hag spoke in sneering tones, and Lord Dudley saw that she had a grave secret in her keeping.

Grasping her by the shoulder, he shook her in a rough manner as he demanded:

"What business are you up to now, you old hag, and what do you mean?"

The vigorous old creature shook herself free from the rude grasp, and darted back a pace or two as she answered:

"None of your rough usage, Charles Dudley, or you will rue the day you angered me. I have borne enough from you in the past for the sake of one who is dearer to me than life, but I will bear no more. We have secrets between us and a common enemy, but you must treat me as an equal when we are alone together, or I will turn on you and sting you to the death in your pride."

The old lord growled and frowned in a fierce manner, but he

did not attempt to touch the old creature again, while he inquired in gentler tones:

"What has got into you to-night, Moll? Have I not trouble enough on my hands at present without your plaguing me in this manner?"

"Then why do you not listen to me and treat me as you should do, after what I have suffered at your hands and served you like a dog."

"You were serving yourself also; but enough of that. What have you to say about Lady Dudley, and what has she to live for now?"

The old creature cast a glance at the smoldering castle as she answered:

"I will speak plainly. Do you remember a certain incident that occurred about sixteen years ago?"

"Yes, I do that, as I suppose you allude to the disappearance of a certain brat."

"Yes, I allude to the disappearance of Lady Dudley's son by her first husband, and who would be heir to all her fortune if he survived."

"But he does not survive, as you made away with him, Moll."

"I did not make away with him, as he is alive to-night, and he is with his mother at present."

"You lying old hag! You say this to torture me in my hour of agony."

"It is the truth, Lord Dudley. I thought I killed the young brat, but I learned since that old Jim Boggs rescued him. The lad was here in the castle to-night. He folded his mother in his arms and bore her from the burning building. He was shot down there in the graveyard and he is lying wounded in the keeper's lodge now, with his mother and the little black fiend watching over him."

Lord Dudley appeared to be dazed for a moment or so at the startling information, and he staggered back and leaned against a tree as he gasped forth:

"Can this be true, and has she recognized the infernal brat?"

"She has recognized him by the mark on his breast, and by the eyes, that resemble his father so much," answered the old hag in emphatic and wicked tones. "Charles Dudley, you must strike at once, or your son and mine will be a beggar. Do you imagine that I am croaking, as I watched at the keeper's window while your lady was dressing the wound in the lad's breast, and I heard her muttered exclamations of joy when she discovered that she was nursing her own lost son."

"Did she proclaim her discovery?" eagerly demanded the old lord.

"She did not, but she will ere the coming day is over, and then all will be lost for us. You must strike, Charles Dudley, and there is but one to strike at."

"You mean the brat, Moll, and is he not dangerously wounded?"

"He is not dangerously wounded, and I do not mean the brat, who is now a stalwart lad, with all the fire and courage of his old race in him."

"Then whom must I strike at if not the lad?"

"At the lady, you old fool! The great discovery has given her a new lease of life, and she will live to protect and proclaim her son if she is not put out of the way at once. The secret is locked up in her own breast now, but she will proclaim it soon after the dawn of the day if her lips are not closed forever."

The old lord seized the hag's hands, as he hissed into her ears:

"Then you must seal her lips forever, Moll, and remember that you will strike for your own son as well as for mine. Has-

ten away to the keeper's lodge and strike a blow that will make your son my heir, as you know that Lady Dudley's death gives me all her fortune. Away with you if you speak the truth, and hereafter you will be mistress of Dudley Castle until my son weds Maud Vernon."

The wicked old hag nodded her head in approval, grinning the while in a fearful manner, as she replied:

"Yes, I will commit this last crime for the sake of our son, and then you must swear to me that old Joe Boggs and his daughter will be at my mercy when they are captured."

"I will swear to that, Moll."

"Then I will away to silence your lady before she can proclaim the secret, and you can deal with her wounded brat."

The old hag hastened away through the graveyard, and Lord Dudley walked toward the smoldering castle, muttering to himself:

"Can it be possible that this young Paul Jones brought this brat here to sting me in my dearest hopes? Can it be that the brat is really alive and watched over by his own mother? If it is so, Moll will strike the fatal blow, and then to build another grander castle for my brave son to flourish in hereafter."

The old hag stole across the graveyard and then down to the keeper's lodge, which was situated at the end of the park to the right of the castle.

As all the followers under Lord Dudley were out on that eventful night, his good lady and the little black boy were alone in the lodge with the wounded young sailor.

Hank Carson was not seriously wounded, and he was sleeping calmly when the old hag stole to the window and peered in.

Lady Dudley was seated at a chair at the bedside, with the sleeper's hand within her own.

The little black boy was reclining on a chair in the next room and he appeared to be sound asleep when the old hag stole in through the front door.

Lady Dudley appeared to be dozing also, yet she was muttering aloud:

"I have found him at last, and oh, I will live now to witness his joy when he discovers that I am his mother, and that he will be the heir to all my wealth."

The old hag stole into the bedroom and stared a moment at the sleeping sailor lad before she advanced behind the lady with her hand upraised.

In that hand appeared a bright knife, and on the old hag's face a murderous grin could be seen.

The deadly weapon was descending on its murderous mission when the little black boy darted into the room and seized old Mother Boggs by the right wrist as he cried aloud:

"You vile old wretch, could you murder the good lady angel?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BLACK BOY'S SECRET.

Lady Dudley sprang up with a start on hearing the little negro's voice, and Hank Carson raised his head from the pillow, crying:

"What's the row, Donis?"

"This old wretch tried to murder the good lady angel," answered Donis, as he struggled with old Mother Boggs, who was attempting to free herself from his grasp.

Hank sprang from the bed to hasten to the assistance of his little friend, and Lady Dudley cried aloud:

"Help—help! Murder will be done here!"

The old hag was darting the knife toward the door, and she succeeded in freeing her right hand as she fled forth:

"Then you take it, you black imp!"

The murderous knife struck the brave little fellow in the breast, and he sank to the floor, exclaiming:

"Mercy on me, I'm killed! Hank—Hank, tell Captain Jones I died in defending the good lady."

The murderous old woman darted out of the front door after dealing the murderous blow, and the wounded sailor boy ran after her, saying:

"Murder—murder! Will no one help me to take that wicked woman?"

The active old hag darted into the park, and Hank staggered after her, as he kept crying:

"Help, help, murder! Thunder alive, why am I so weak when I want to be strong?"

The old hag disappeared among the trees, and Hank Carson staggered and fell as he groaned forth:

"Hang it all, but I will fix her yet when I am strong enough to avenge poor Donis."

Lady Dudley staggered out of the cottage and hastened to the fallen lad, as she exclaimed:

"Oh, goodness, goodness, this will be the death of him, and is there no help near?"

The keeper who lived in the lodge appeared on the scene at the moment, and he hastened to assist the wounded lad in getting back to the cottage.

They then found poor Donis lying on the floor in the bedroom, with his hand pressed to his breast.

They raised the wounded lad and placed him on the sofa, while Hank was forced to recline on the bed again.

Lady Dudley then ordered the keeper away for a surgeon, as she said to him:

"Send some of my people here at once, and make all haste to town for a surgeon, as you value my favor."

Hank Carson was thoroughly exhausted by the loss of blood and his late exertions, and he soon fell into another sound slumber.

The lady swallowed a small cup of liquor which she found in the closet of the keeper, and she forced some drops of it down the black boy's throat, as she said to him.

"My poor lad, I pray that you are not fatally wounded, and I will reward you for your brave act to-night."

The black boy's bright eyes glistened as the lady pressed his hand, and he answered in feeble tones:

"Tell Captain Jones that I did my duty, and that I could die for the one who aided us."

The lady was unbuttoning the jacket on the little negro, and she could then perceive the blood flowing through the woollen shirt beneath.

She was about to open the shirt when the little fellow pressed her hand, saying:

"Oh, lady, good angel lady, is Hank asleep now?"

"The sailor lad is sound asleep."

"Then you will keep my secret, and you will not let the surgeon betray me."

"What secret, my poor boy?"

"Dear lady, I am not a boy at all. I am a young girl not more than sixteen, and I am French. I am not black, as my skin is as white as your own when the dye is off."

The good lady stared down at the black face as she exclaimed in amazement:

"You are raving, my boy! Why, your skin is as black as ebony, and even the blood in your breast will not wash the color away."

"I know it, I know it, good lady. I am dyed from head to foot, and nothing but the acid you will find in the bottle in my coat will wash the stain away. You see that my hair is cut close, and it is inclined to curl like that of a negro. Oh, lady,

lady, do not betray my secret if I die or if I live, as I would die with shame if Captain Paul Jones knew all."

"You amaze me, and I cannot believe that you are not a black boy. However, whatever you may be I pledge you my word that I will keep the secret."

"Heaven bless you, dear lady, and now I will tell you who and what I am before the surgeon comes."

"Then be as brief as possible, as you are so very faint."

"I will, I will. I am a French girl, born in Toulon, and my name is Lucille Maynard. I met young Paul Jones in my native city over a year ago, and I learned to love him, but he scarcely noticed me. Alas, I became so infatuated with the brave youth that I left my home and disguised myself as a negro boy to follow him in the privateer in which he was mate. When I am dead tell him of my love, and he will pity me."

"Yes, yes, my poor creature, but you will not die, and I will keep your secret and protect you to the end. Be silent now, as I hear footsteps outside."

The outer door was flung open, and Lord Dudley stole into the cottage, followed by his son and six or seven soldiers.

Lights were soon brought into the bedroom, and Lord Dudley stared at Hank Carson, and then at the disguised girl, the latter having fainted away in the meantime, as he cried:

"Why, these are the two young pirate rascals who assisted in the sacking of the castle last night. Come away with me, Lady Dudley, and we will deal with the prisoners as they deserve."

"No—no! I will not away with you, sir, as my place is here at present."

"You must be mad, lady. Charley, seize your mother and take her out to the carriage. The last night's terrible work has deranged her mind, and——"

"Don't touch me, wretch!" interrupted the good lady, "as I will remain here with these wounded boys. Lord Dudley, I am not mad, and I——"

Before the good lady could say another word Captain Dudley seized her in his arms, placing his hand on her mouth at the same time, while his father whispered into his ear:

"Away with her, and see that she does not utter another word."

CHAPTER XIX.

A MYSTERIOUS ESCAPE.

Lady Dudley was in a fearful rage on being dragged into the carriage by her stepson, but she soon fell back on the seat, as if thoroughly exhausted.

The carriage had not proceeded far when old Mother Boggs darted out from a grove and entered the vehicle, as she remarked to Captain Dudley, with an ugly grin:

"I see you have caught the old bird, and I hope she didn't sing a song to betray her secret?"

"We didn't give her time, old woman, and you must take care of her now."

"And won't I take care of her. Who will think of seeking the poor old dame where I will place her, while the fools who may know the spot are scattered forever."

"Where will you take her to?" eagerly inquired Captain Dudley, as he saw that the lady was still insensible.

"To the smuggler's cave, sir. I will secure her there for the present, and if her body is found on the rocks in a day or so, it will be said that the unfortunate lady flung herself from the cliff while she was mad."

"That is a good plan, Mother Boggs. Take her to your cottage now, and the driver will report that I left her safe in your hands."

orders to the driver, when old Mother Boggs called him to her side, saying in whispered tones:

"I suppose you will put out to sea after that young rascal as soon as you can, captain?"

"I expect to sail out in a day or two after I reach London."

"Then away with you, brave captain, and I swear to you that this old lady will die before she can declare her secret."

"While my father will attend to her brat and the black boy. Farewell, Mother Boggs, until you see me entering the harbor yonder with the young pirate and his crew as prisoners."

"Farewell, and good luck to you, noble captain, and may the crimes I commit bring you happiness hereafter."

The carriage had scarcely driven away from the keeper's lodge when old Captain Johnson arrived there in search of Lord Dudley and the young captain.

The old sea captain was eager to get away to London to go out in quest of the Scorpion, and he addressed Lord Dudley in blunt tones, crying:

"Why is Captain Dudley lingering here and the horses awaiting us, old friend?"

Lord Dudley had just left the bedroom where the insensible prisoners were lying, and he had hastened out to the door of the lodge to speak to his old friend.

The soldiers were then keeping guard in the outer room, and the disguised French girl and Hank Carson were left alone for the time.

Lord Dudley hastened to explain to his old friend about the capture of the wounded lads from the Scorpion and the madness of his wife, and he continued, saying:

"You know, old friend, that my poor lady has been an invalid for some time, and last night's fearful work has set her mad entirely. Charles is gone to place her under the charge of a faithful servant, and he will be ready to ride away with you soon now."

"And what are you going to do with those prisoners, Dudley?" inquired the old sea captain.

"If they recover, which is very doubtful, I will send them to prison, of course, but I propose to keep them here under guard for the present. The rascals deserve no mercy, as they were playing the part of pirates, but yet they are prisoners of war, and I will treat them as such."

"Certainly, certainly, my lord. I always maintain that privateers should be treated as pirates, but the government will not look on the rascals in that light."

The two old friends then conversed about the expected fight between the Marmion and the Scorpion, and Captain Johnson declared that the English frigate would make short work of the French privateer.

While they were conversing, Captain Dudley returned to report that he had placed the invalid lady in safe hands, and to declare that he was ready to start for London on the instant.

Before mounting the horse on which he was to ride the first stage of the journey, Charles Dudley drew his father aside, and said to him:

"The invalid will be disposed of to-night, and let us see that you will get rid of her brat and that black boy."

"Fear not on that score, Charles, as I swear that they will never leave the lodge alive."

The young officer and the old sea captain mounted their horses and rode away toward the great city, and Lord Dudley entered the lodge again, muttering:

"Now to get rid of the soldiers, and then to dose the young dogs inside. I should have Molly to aid me, but she will be busy with the other."

Lord Dudley then dismissed his soldiers, saying:

"The rascals inside have received their death wounds, and they will not need any watching over them."

The keeper who lived in the lodge alone remained in the outer room with Lord Dudley, and the fellow was one of his pliant tools.

When the soldiers were well out of the way the old lord opened the door leading into the bedroom and stared in at Hank Carson, who still appeared to be sleeping calmly.

He then turned his eyes toward the sofa where the pretended black boy had been lying, and he continued to glare around the room as he cried:

"What in thunder has become of the little black imp?"

The keeper entered the bedroom also and stared around as he answered:

"I can't make out what has become of him, my lord, and he must have got out through the window there."

"Search under the bed and in the closet there!" cried Lord Dudley, giving vent to a terrible imprecation at the same time.

The loud voices aroused Hank Carson, and he opened his eyes, crying:

"Good lady, what is the row now?"

"Secure this fellow before he can escape also," cried Lord Dudley to the keeper.

Having secured Hank, Lord Dudley and the keeper hastened out into the garden in search of the pretended negro boy.

They could not find a trace of him, however, and the old nobleman ordered the keeper away in further search of him, saying:

"If you find the black rascal, don't spare him. If the others have caught him, bring him here to me at once, and seal his lips in the meantime."

The old lord then entered the bedroom to keep watch over Hank, whom he addressed in insolent tones, saying:

"You young hang-dog, how dare you call on Lady Dudley in such familiar terms?"

"I call on her because she was good to me, and I know she wouldn't let you treat me in this way if she were near," boldly answered Hank. "But I know that Donis has gone to bring her to me, and then I'll be all right."

Lord Dudley was then satisfied that his lady had not betrayed her secret to her son, and that the black boy was also ignorant of the relationship between them.

The old plotter became so anxious about the escaped prisoner that he hastened to mount a horse and go in search of him, leaving Hank in charge of the keeper.

Yet no one could find a trace of the black boy from the prisoner that day, although a large reward was offered for his capture.

When darkness set in at night, Lord Dudley stole to Mother Boggs' cottage.

A peculiar tap on the window brought the old hag to the door.

"How is she now?" inquired Lord Dudley.

"I have done her and she will sleep for hours, only to awake in death," was the grim answer. "Before midnight I will steal her to the cave and then into the water with her."

The two conspirators consulted for some time, and then Lord Dudley stole away.

About an hour before midnight Mother Boggs left the cottage bearing a heavy bag on her back.

The old wretch looked carefully around as she made her way toward the cliff, but she did not perceive a human being in sight.

Yet a pair of sharp eyes followed her movements, and quickly followed in her path as she entered the cave under the cliff.

The old hag threw down the bag on entering the cave and muttered aloud:

"It is well that she is worn almost to a skeleton, though my

arms are strong yet. Yes, yes; they are strong enough to hurl her over the cliff, and then her secret will perish forever."

A rough-looking boy stole up behind the old hag at the moment and dealt her a blow on the head that knocked her senseless on the floor, while a musical voice exclaimed:

"Perfidious old wretch, I will save you from committing a foul crime!"

CHAPTER XX.

STANDING TO HIS FRIENDS.

About an hour after midnight Lady Dudley and Donis—as we will still call the disguised French girl—were seated in the safe hiding place of the smugglers, and the latter was saying:

"Something tells me that Captain Jones will come to our aid, as he is not one to desert his friends."

"Heaven send that he may, as we are powerless without him. The old hag is in our power, but remember the threat she made after she recovered from the blow you dealt her in the other cave."

"I remember it, good lady. The spiteful old witch declared that she was employed by Lord Dudley, and that he would rescue her and protect her."

"And she also swore that my dear son was dying. Oh, why did you not try to rescue him when you escaped from the keeper's cottage?"

"It was impossible, lady. He was sound asleep at the time, and you know that he was too weak to get away with me."

"But he may be pretending, as you were. Oh, how can we save him? Lord Dudley is a vile wretch, and I know that he would seize me again if I appeared at the cottage, while I am not able to stir at present."

The good lady was very weak indeed, and so was the disguised girl.

The latter had been hiding in the wood all the day without food, when she started for the secret cave, only to perceive the old hag bearing the good lady in the bag.

Suspecting treachery, the brave girl secured a club and followed the hag.

Having knocked her senseless, the disguised girl hastened to restore Lady Dudley, when they both secured Mother Boggs.

Donis then proposed in whispers that they should retreat to the other cave over the little harbor, saying:

"That vile old wretch deserves death at our hands, but we will leave her here."

Then they secured the old hag to an iron ring, binding and gagging her as well as possible.

Telling the good lady that her wound was only a slight one, the French girl supported her during the short journey to the other cave, where they found wine and other refreshments in abundance.

The fond mother and her friend were both anxious to go to the assistance of the wounded sailor lad, but they did not dare to venture out of the cave again, fearing to fall into Lord Dudley's clutches.

Seeing the anguish of the lady in behalf of her son, Donis said:

"If I could but procure a disguise I would change my face and— Dear me, a boat is coming below. Oh, lady, lady, if it should be young Captain Jones, or any of the crew, you will preserve my secret?"

"With my life, Donis."

"Then I will cut and give a signal. I felt in my soul that he would not desert his friends."

The disguised girl hastened to the mouth of the cave to give the signal, which was responded to at once.

Within five minutes after Little Paul Jones was standing before Lady Dudley, saying:

"I am astonished on seeing you here, noble lady, and I came back to rescue my friends."

Lady Dudley and the young hero soon held a private consultation, which was concluded by the latter saying:

"I will rescue your son, good lady, and I will keep your secret for the present. We must also deal with this treacherous woman."

Acting against his father's advice, Little Paul Jones steered back to the English coast again that night for the sole purpose of rescuing Hank Carson and Donis.

Old Joe Boggs made one of the party landing in the boat, and the young hero soon drew the old smuggler aside to tell him about his wife.

"Then she must die!" said the stern old man, "and then I will lead you to the cottage to rescue the young fellow."

"Spare her for the present," said Captain Jones, "as we may need her evidence hereafter."

"As you say, captain, but she must die for her treachery in the end. I know she hated my girl, but I had no thought that she was such a born fiend altogether."

Little Paul Jones had about twenty-five men under him.

The Scorpion was lying off about two miles from the little secret bay, keeping behind the headland the while.

The little hero did not wish to alarm his enemies in the town again, as he hoped to rescue Hank and Donis by a secret movement.

Old Joe Boggs led a small party to the second cave, to secure the old hag before Lord Dudley could rescue her, while young Captain Jones led the others toward the keeper's cottage.

Lady Dudley was too weak to move, and she was compelled to remain in the cave.

Old Paul Jones was on board the clipper, and the old hero did not approve of his son's effort in behalf of Hank and Donis.

While Joe Boggs and three sailors moved along the cliff to the other cave, Little Paul Jones led his party across the country toward the ruined castle, all moving in a cautious manner.

They did not encounter a living soul until they reached the keeper's cottage, which they surrounded in silence.

Little Paul Jones knocked on the front door, but he did not receive a response.

The door was then forced open, only to find that the cottage was deserted.

"They must have taken Hank to the jail in the town," said the young captain.

"I fear he is dead," responded Donis.

"Dead or alive, we will find out where he is before we leave the shore. Who is this running this way?"

Old Joe Boggs soon appeared before the young captain, and the smuggler was puffing like a porpoise as he gasped forth:

"We are caught in a trap, Captain Jones, and I only escaped by the skin of my teeth. Lord Dudley and the soldiers hold the two caves, the good lady is a prisoner, and your boat is taken."

The old smuggler drew a long breath before he completed his story.

His wife had been rescued from the cave by Lord Dudley, who was out with a force in search of the pretended black boy.

Joe Boggs and the sailors were attacked on entering the cave after the old hag, and the old smuggler only escaped by fighting his way out, while the privateers with him were either slain or captured.

The old smuggler was making his way to the other cave, when he discovered that it was held by the soldiers, one of whom had been playing the spy on the privateers.

In fact, Captain Paul Jones and his friends were in a bad

fix, as their boat had been seized, while a large body of soldiers held all the paths leading back to the coast.

"There's only one path open for us to the clipper, and we must take it."

"What path is that?" inquired Joe Boggs.

"We must steer for the harbor, seize boats there, and put out for the clipper."

"Let us be on the move then, captain, as all the troops in the town will soon be out here after us."

While thus speaking, the old smuggler turned toward the town, and the whole party soon reached a grove bordering on the high road.

A bugle sounded in front of them soon after, while shouts and cries were heard behind.

Little Paul Jones drew his men up in the grove, saying in subdued tones:

"It is evident that our foes are in front and rear now, while the cliffs are held by the enemy also. We must make a dash for it to the harbor and signal to the clipper to come to our aid. Courage, my brave lads, and all will be well. I got you into this scrape while trying to aid friends, and I will get you out of it."

A low murmur of applause greeted the words of the young captain, and the old smuggler said:

"If we could get around to the other side of the town, captain, by taking to the hills back here we'll steal a march on the sharks."

"Then lead the way as fast as you can, old man, and we will with you."

CHAPTER XXI.

HANK CARSON'S ADVENTURES.

Hank Carson was as plucky as ever, even while wounded and bound to the bed in the cottage, and he did not despair for a moment.

The rough sailor lad was attracted to Lady Dudley by a sympathy that he could not understand, while he had not the remotest idea that she was his mother.

The keeper watching over the prisoner was not a hard-hearted man, and pity soon entered into his heart.

He unbound the lad's arms and legs, dressed his wound, and supplied him with nourishing drinks and food.

Toward night Hank fell into a sound slumber, from which he was aroused by the keeper, who said to him:

"Lord Dudley is coming to take you away now, and I must tie you again. Remember that I was your friend as much as I could."

"I'll not forget it, old fellow."

Lord Dudley soon entered the cottage, accompanied by three of his followers.

Hank pretended to be suffering terribly, and he groaned forth:

"I say, won't you get a surgeon for me, or send me to the hospital?"

The wicked man glared at the lad in a venomous manner as he replied:

"Yes, I'll send you to the hospital at once, and these men are here to take you."

The prisoner was then taken out of the cottage and placed on a rough cart.

The cart did not proceed in the direction of the town, however, as the horse was faced up toward the hills at the back of the castle.

The three fellows who had Hank in charge were silent until they reached an old building on the top of the hill, when one of them said:

"All we have to do is to watch him in here till we hear from the master again."

"He'll be dead by morning," responded another, as they bore Hank into the old building and flung him on some straw in the corner of a bare apartment.

About an hour after midnight two of the men stretched themselves on the floor to sleep, and the other took a seat at the door, a heavy club resting on his knees and his eyes on the prisoner.

Hank felt that he must act at last in order to get away to the cave before daybreak, and he made a sudden spring at the fellow and dealt him a blow on the head.

The man fell on the floor, yelling:

"Help, mates, as the young one was foxing."

Hank seized the club and one of the pistols in the fellow's belt, while the others sprang to their feet, one of them crying:

"Fix him, Jack, and the old lord won't be sorry, either."

But suddenly the door was burst open, and into the old house house sprang young Captain Jones and the old smuggler, the former crying:

"We're on hand to help you, Hank, and down with the land-sharks!"

Donis and several sailors sprang in also, the former crying:

"Thank Heaven! the brave lad is alive still!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CLIPPER TO THE RESCUE.

While retreating around the town by the hills Captain Paul Jones and his friends heard the fight in the old house, and they were just in time to save Hank Carson.

The three rascals were overpowered in short order, one of them having received a mortal wound from the pistol in the hands of the brave lad, and were then flung down into a pit under the old house, so that they could not inform the pursuers as to the strength of the privateers.

As the privateers skirted the town they could hear the alarm bells ringing and the cannon booming, while the clipper could be perceived moving up toward the mouth of the harbor.

Captain Jones felt a thrill of joy in his heart on seeing the Scorpion, and he said to himself:

"My noble father saw our signals on the hill, and he understands our position. He will rescue us, if he had to fight his way through all the force in the town."

The privateers finally made their way through the town to the dock, and to their joy were met by over a hundred men, who had just reached the dock in three large boats.

The old hero of the Revolution was the first to spring on the dock to greet his son, as he cried to him:

"I see the sharks are on you, captain, and now we will at them in turn."

It was indeed so. Lord Dudley was close by with both dragons and foot soldiers, and they were advancing rapidly when the sailors swarmed up on the deck.

Young Captain Jones took command of his men, while his father whispered to him:

"Lord Dudley is in front, and I feel that I am to settle with him to-night. We cannot retreat in the boats until we defeat the soldiers."

"Then we will defeat them, sir," answered the young hero. The soldiers fired one volley, and charged down on the run. "One volley, boys, and then at them with the pikes and swords!"

A rattling volley crashed into the close ranks of the enemy, and the front files were either swept down or thrown into the

A terrible struggle then ensued on the large dock, but it lasted only a few minutes.

The foot soldiers could not resist the desperate privateers, and they fell back on the dragoons in dire dismay.

A regular stampede soon ensued, the horsemen flying along the streets and docks in the wildest disorder.

Old Paul Jones was one of the first to dash out against the foe, and the old hero bore a plain sword in his right hand.

Lord Dudley was leading the soldiers to the charge, and he had dismounted on reaching the head of the dock.

"Death to treacherous slanderers!" cried an old sailor, as he sprang at Lord Dudley.

The old nobleman started a little on hearing the voice, and he then struck at old Paul Jones as he cried:

"Your false voice reminds me of a pirate I knew in other days, and I will slay you, old hag, on that account."

"No; but I will slay you on account of your base intrigues against one whom you dared not meet with the sword in other days, Lord Dudley."

While thus speaking old Paul Jones dealt his ancient enemy a terrific blow on the breast, and bore him to the ground.

Without waiting to witness the result of the fight, the old hero then bent down and dragged his enemy behind some barrels, as he hissed into his ear:

"Have you not received your death wound now, you old wretch?"

"I have—I have!" groaned the dying man. "What voice is that I hear?"

"It is the voice of the man you persecuted in Russia. Old Paul Jones did not die in France, and I am the man."

"Is it possible?"

"It is the truth, Lord Dudley. I live to have vengeance on my enemies. You die by my hand, and so will Captain Johnson. Your vile son has been beaten by my brave son, and he will defeat and slay him at sea."

"No, no! My gallant son will avenge me, and he will hang you and your pirate son to the masthead of his frigate."

A scornful chuckle burst from old Paul Jones, as he replied:

"If your vile spirit can see what passes in this world hereafter, you will perceive my son a victor on the deck of the Marmion."

The dying man gave a fearful gasp, and then perished, with the eyes of his old foe glaring down on him.

At the moment young Paul Jones led his men back to their boats, and all their foes were baffled for the time.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

Bearing the dead and wounded with them, the privateers retreated to the clipper.

Nancy Boggs was only too happy to act as a nurse for Hank Carson, and the stout lad was placed under her care.

When Maud Vernon heard of the death of Lord Dudley, she said to Captain Jones:

"It is my duty to go on shore now and to take care of the good lady, as I will be safe in her charge."

The young lady was put on shore, and she soon succeeded in finding Lady Dudley.

The good woman was delighted to hear that the lad called Hank Carson was safe on board the Scorpion, while she prayed to meet her son at an early day.

Old Mother Boggs disappeared from the neighborhood when she heard of the death of Lord Dudley, and a report spread around that she went to London to seek Captain Dudley, who would assume his father's title.

Lady Dudley regained health and strength in an amazing manner, taking charge of the estate, which she had inherited

from her own father, while she declared that the young lord would never be her heir.

One fine morning a sail was discovered off the coast, when the people soon discovered that the stranger was an English frigate, and the Marmion was soon anchored in the harbor, with young Lord Dudley in command.

Soon afterward another sail was sighted, and it proved to be the Scorpion.

The Marmion was soon under full sail and moving out to meet her famous foe.

The two frigates were soon at their murderous work in the broad bay, and they exchanged several sharp broadsides before they closed together to decide the conflict with swords and pistols.

The French were the first to gain the deck of the enemy, who received them with cheers and shouts of defiance.

Little Paul Jones led the boarders, and his heroic father was close by him in the attack.

The English rushed at the enemy with intense fury, their captain crying:

"Death to the pirate dogs!"

Little Paul Jones dashed forward to encounter his enemy, as he retorted:

"Death to the base coward who attacks helpless ladies!"

The swords of the rivals clashed together in their last encounter, and the crews on each side became engaged at the same time.

The young rivals fought in a furious manner for some moments, when Captain Dudley received a thrust in the left breast, and he fell on his knees as he cried:

"Slay the pirate dog, some of you, and let him not live to crow over me."

"I will do it!" cried Captain Johnson, as he aimed a pistol at Little Paul Jones and fired at the same time.

At that instant Donis sprang in front of the young captain, only to receive a fatal wound in the breast.

Old Paul recognized his ancient foe, and he sprang at him with his sword as he yelled out in hoarse tones:

"You old dog, I'll settle with you!"

Captain Johnson appeared to recognize the voice, and he glared at the old boatswain, defending himself with his sword, as he cried:

"Where did I hear that voice before?"

"You will know when you are dying, you treacherous dog. Take that, and now know that it is old Paul Jones who kills you."

The dying man glared up at his foe and then muttered:

"I am slain by the dead!"

The conflict was still raging, but the English were giving way.

The death of their young captain and his old friend caused them to fall back in dismay, and the privateers pressed on with greater fury.

In less than half an hour after boarding, the privateers were masters of the Marmion, and the Scorpion was ready to continue her course as the scourge of the English coast.

About two years after the capture of the Marmion, and when France and England were at peace for a time, two strangers paid a visit to the town of Fairport.

The strangers were young men of excellent appearance and manners.

One of them was tall and well built, and the other was a little below the medium height.

After putting up at a hotel they called on Lady Dudley, who still resided in the town.

The good lady clasped the tall young man to her breast, as she exclaimed:

"My dear son, I can die in peace now, as I am ready to prove your parentage."

The lad known as Hank Carson embraced the lady in turn, as he replied:

"And proud I am to have such a nice lady for a mother."

Two young women were present at the affecting interview, and one of them was Maud Vernon.

The other was Nancy Boggs, the old smuggler's daughter, who had been acting as a companion to Lady Dudley for some time.

When the proper greetings were over, Lady Dudley addressed the young people, saying:

"The woman known as Mother Boggs died here in great agony last week. Before her death she confessed before witnesses that she had stolen my son, in order to make way for her own child."

"And is it true, lady," inquired Captain Paul Jones, who was the small stranger, "that Captain Dudley was her son?"

"It is true, captain. The bad woman was married in secret to Lord Dudley before I ever met him. She was of humble birth and he was ashamed of her, while he pretended that she was dead when he married me. They plotted against my son and myself, but they failed, thank Heaven."

"Thank Heaven, indeed," said the little hero.

"What of my father?" inquired Nancy Boggs, as she turned to Hank Carson.

"I am sorry to tell you, Nancy, that you will never see him again. We had a double funeral in Paris three weeks ago, when we buried your father and our old boatswain, who was known on board the Scorpion as Tom Henri."

Little Paul Jones sighed, and he then turned to Lady Dudley, saying:

"At the request of one very dear to me, who is now dead, I am going to America to settle in that country."

"And I would like to go with him," said Hank.

"Then we will all go to the new country together," answered Lady Dudley. "Maud and Nancy have agreed to go with me, and I have settled my affairs here."

And so it was decided that all the friends should sail together for the new land.

Little Paul Jones had won wealth and fame on the English coast, and he had never suffered defeat.

He won a fair wife also, as Maud Vernon became his bride before they left England.

Yet the brave young son of the old hero could never forget the devoted French girl who had died for him, as he discovered her secret when she was breathing her last on the deck of the Marmion.

Hank Carson gained a bride also, as well as a fortune, by his adventures on the coast, as Nancy Boggs became the wife of the hardy young sailor.

THE END.

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